The AMERICAN REVIEW
VOLUME FOUR NUMBER ONE
NOVEMBER 1934

Shall We Have an Aristocracy?

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IN A world where two forces are vigorously contending for the monopoly of power — on the one hand, speculative and non-productive finance capital seeking to pyramid profits for the sake of profits; on the other, the Marxians who would fain be the guardian angels of their regimented paradise on earth — the true libertarian finds it impossible to make a choice between the two, and so is inclined to mysticize himself with dialectic or *mal du siècle* in the vague hope that Providence may remove him from the scene before either the Republicans (in the modern reactionary American sense of the word) or the Communists shall triumph.

Thus, according to Spengler, the "Hour of Decision" has come for the "classes" to turn their backs upon the nonsense of democracy which permits policies of state to be determined by the mass of uninformed men, and to establish a new aristocracy based upon the organization of competent armies and controlled by men superior to capitalist and proletarian alike. Nietzsche expressed the same opinion somewhat more philosophically; Ortega, in his *Revolt of the Masses*, more graciously. In countries where today democracy has been discarded, the same trend towards specialized aristocracy is discernible: Hitler is not only friendly but probably subservient to royalty, and Mussolini has already traced his ancestry to an ancient Roman king! Stalin rules from the transcendental peak of Absolute Monarchy, and the Bolshevist plenipotentiaries live, dress, and entertain after the manner of the *élite internationale*.

All this, Herr Spengler finds vastly promising. According to him, Rome was ruined when the common people under the Gracchi and Marius upset the leadership of the old families of the Senate. The same thing happened to France when the eighteenth-century intellectuals challenged the ancient institutions of aristocracy and Church. The same thing happened in America when the old families were replaced by the wire-pulling Jacksonian Democrats. The result has been a reign of vulgarity, bad manners, and bad taste in everything from politics to art. Democracy has not worked: as a civilization it is the wormy decay of a past culture which must be recaptured by the rule of a select minority or aristocracy. . . .

The fallacy of such reasoning is, of course, the old Puritan dogma of Absolute Good with its tendency to paint everything black or white. It leavened politics in the past; it is doing so now in the present reaction. Just as the Puritans spun fine theology such as Election to reconcile the opposing truths of God's omnipotence and man's free will, so they manufactured the ridiculous theory of equality to reconcile democracy and the inequality of talents. As Catholicism had to go to make way for the former, so aristocracy had to go to make way for the latter. However, Omnipotence and Free Will remain equally (if irreconcilably) true, as do democracy and aristocracy.

The libertarian, therefore, does not have to make a choice between democracy and aristocracy. It is paradoxical but nevertheless true that democracy and aristocracy are complements in the social fabric. The eighteenth-century French intellectuals, characterized by Spengler as "silly" for destroying the aristocracy, exerted their enlightenment and influence upon the *aristocrats* who in turn took up the cudgels for the new revolutionary ideas. In America, the Revolution was prosecuted and the government formed by aristocrats prompted by pure democratic principles.

In considering, therefore, why the choice of an American aristocracy would necessarily imply the acceptance of American democracy, care must be taken in the connotation of the words. Ideological democracy does not mean industrial democracy, aristocracy does not mean plutocracy, and individual liberty does not mean individualism.

II

Whatever the weaknesses of men, they are still in the aggregate willing to sacrifice life for liberty; and wherever a crowd collects, there is to be found proof of some inherent nobility in its sympathy for what is noble. As de Tocqueville observes, despotism may govern without faith but liberty cannot; and the faith of mankind (since heaven does not send angels to govern us) must be expressed in terms of dependence, or a mutual call upon humanity: in a word, in democracy. Democracy, therefore, represents justice as well as reality: justice, because it is first and last the most uniform and permanent tendency in history, the expression of that aspiration in each individual by which men in the mass are raised, and the gift of God Himself as defined by the equality of human souls; and reality, because its swift momentum makes the people the arbiters of their own terms. That greed and fear hold sway at any particular time, thus delaying the fulfilment of higher aims, is no proof that the people are incapable of anything higher than greed and fear: it is simply proof that the habit of procrastination is a human instinct, making the mass as slow to essay good as to essay evil.

But, as Rousseau himself admitted, so perfect a government as democracy may only be perfectly practised by the gods; for opposed to the divine truth of the equality of human souls is the human truth that inequality is a natural and inescapable condition of life. Nature, to whose laws reformers (the definers of materialistic religions) are prone to point for proof of equality, has no equality: her sovereign law is subordination and dependence. According to the nature of the individual are graded his powers and functions; it is admirable for all men to aspire to be something higher, but it is a mark of degeneracy to fall lower than nature has endowed a man. The higher contains all that the lower has, and something more; and therefore it is a truism that the lower exists for the sake of the higher, not the reverse. All men cannot be herbs; but for such as can be, a place and opportunity must be provided to grow in: as for the rest, vegetation is sound at core and beautiful in its place.

Thus the limitations of humanity and the ideals of democracy result ***naturally*** in the creation of a higher and a lower order, an aristocracy and a peasantry, whose aims and sympathies are common. For what is the aristocracy's logic but a derivation from the realities which the simple-minded eternally contemplate? What is the aristocracy's honour but a code of nobility inherent in the innocent? What is the aristocracy's hospitality but a shadow of that perfect charity practised by the poor? What is the aristocracy's grace but an imitation of the humility of the humble? And where does the aristocracy find its fulfilment but in the point of departure still occupied by the common people? Humanity, in its natural order, has no real hunger for equality, but only for justice. The weak expect, and have a right to demand, the protection of the strong: equality would be merely an unnatural means of exploitation.

This natural condition the peasantry, attuned to reality, and the aristocracy, trained in logic derived from reality, can both accept; the former knowing that the problem of reconciling liberty with inequality, and democracy with class, belongs to men of reason; the latter knowing that the higher a man is, the greater his obligations, and that he must, therefore, seek liberty not for himself but for the lower man. Such an aristocracy does not expect the material benefits to which the lower order is entitled – security, luxuries, even a larger voice in the government inasmuch as through children (which the aristocracy does not beget in numbers) the common people have a greater stake in the future.

As a class, therefore, a true aristocracy is *suicidal* so far as materialistic success is concerned, for the paradoxical reason of self-preservation: that is, it would cease to be aristocracy if it did not put principle above class, and class above self-interest. It must have the courage to take up the cudgels for ideas and ideals even if that leads to its downfall – as did the eighteenth-century French aristocracy. It must have the will to endure persecution because it will not descend to beg popularity – desiring what the masses desire, hating what they hate, substituting their prejudices for principle, adopting and furnishing the sophistry to propagate and defend their materialism. In other words, the function of an aristocracy is to hold up as a mirror the record of common glories and failures in the past as an incentive for greater accomplishment in the future, and insist upon the rights of democracy and revolution as giving men *only* the right to choose right principles . . . but in so doing it necessarily concocts with its own life-blood the magic draught of liberty for the masses, and must turn for its own consolation to disillusion, solitude, and annihilation. Dreaming is a well-mannered way of committing suicide.

III

Into this natural harmony of disunion-and-reunion of the aristocracy and the peasantry breaks the blatant note of the preacher of Equality, the Puritan middle-class reformer, disturbing the rational order of life by sowing the seeds of discord and discontent; determined to exterminate the aristocracy (which refuses to become absorbed), and to absorb and tyrannize over the common people by the pretext of making them see with their own (the reformers') eyes, baiting them with materialistic and political sops: in a word, preaching equality to destroy classes in order to recreate a tyrannical middle class of Marxian self-negation.

There is never any real democracy in such materialistic will-to-power. Thus the middle-class Florentine, Machiavelli, declares the people to be "a breed debarred by heredity from civilized recognition, with animal ears plugged with Lucian's wax, inconstant, hypocritical, fearful of danger and covetous of gain". Thus Cromwell, the Puritan "soldier of God in action", is careful to incite his "men of religion against men of honour". Thus Napoleon, the Corsican upstart practising his etiquette and dancing according to the Hapsburg *Ordo*, terms the people "a great children". Thus Hamilton, the ambitious and nameless immigrant, calls them "a great beast", and on that estimate bases his political doctrines (now held by the great middle-class Republican Party) of "love of power, force of arms, and the influence of special privileges". Thus the Romantic poets, precursors of middle-class New England Transcendentalism, condescendingly pat the common people on the head as "children of nature" and "noble savages".

With the triumph of such socially disintegrating influences as "industrial" democracy, and sentimental or puritanic romanticism, men ceased to be attached to any institutions that promised permanence and to be directed by inner impulses which eventuate in life upon a higher plane. Each class, seeking its *own* interest, naturally had no organic sense of the whole: rulers, instead of ruling for the good of the organism, used place and power for private and speculative ends, thereby destroying in the people that higher psychic life of which the essential trait is loyalty to the body of which they are a part.

Wealth, which justifies itself by pretending the poor are incapable (forgetting that only as such could they be exploited by the capable as the basis of wealth!); education, which serves to equip men the better to maintain this unnatural division of mankind – these things, so much a part of our present civilization, can never lift men above their *natural* graces, and indeed may, in feeding vanity, even make men learn to distrust the objectivity of innocence. Such vices, therefore, as are inherent in the mass of men are rendered more dangerous by the plutocracy's encouragement of them as a means to materialistic ends, and by the intellectuals' general justification of materialism. Without the ability to listen to the past, or the will to follow in the future, materialists are prone to take refuge in their own superiority, dodging issues, and living from day to day in the hope of worldly advancement. Since they observe (but do not reason) that nature is self-supporting and civilization is not, they conclude that the excellent world in which they live was produced by nature . . . and so retrogress from the artificial to the natural, from art to nature, back to the barbarism towards which all civilization *that is not continuous* must tend. Unable to understand that the *anti* attitude cannot eliminate the influences they oppose, they become contemptuous of the past which they cannot feel, of history which they do not know. What are the considerations to be determined? Alas, they do not know. They only know that the "community" must be preserved even if man is ruined. Precursors of change, they put a premium on any new *ism*; content to be made by the world, they prefer ignominious success to glorious failure. Specialists and experts, they must create their own superman to take the place of a lost God. Abstract individualism and abstract collectivism can have but one cause and one end – the withdrawal of man from the divine foundations of life and the final destruction of humanism.

IV

For eligibility to an aristocracy there can be no standard, each individual's qualifications being his own passport. Where select minds spring from, no prophet can discern; but they will arise for occasions, the genius involuntarily, the man of talent voluntarily, to plant their seeds of wisdom where the sun of reflection will bring them to ripeness. Birth is an advantage that advances any man twenty years in civilization; but a mere grandfather is not a social institution. Wealth may bring leisure for reflection that converts knowledge into wisdom; but so beautiful a garment as wisdom cannot be worn constantly and must always be worn becomingly. Education offers what is right and best to those minds made happy by its use; but it never in itself produced good taste nor made anything but smart-alecs out of the superficial.

But whatever its constituents, the aristocracy must be a *solid* social class, first, that by a standard of manners it may preserve a model of honour for the lower classes (which prefer to imitate rather than innovate); and second, that it may be kept closed to pretentious plutocrats seeking to purchase social superiority with their wealth, to pseudo-intellectuals in search of an audience, and to minor artists imitating the talents and genius of the great rebels in art as a weapon against what they dislike in traditions and good taste. Indeed, the purpose of an aristocracy being to offer itself as a vicarious sacrifice for the drawing-up of all men to itself, it would accomplish no literary achievement in the sense of attempting to reconcile the contrast between ideals and a material environment (the conflict between reason and romantic illusion that results either in proudly stricken gloom, *weltschmerz* or *mal du siècle*, or in a Byronic rebellion as a Prometheus or Bonnivard against the "mob" in an imaginative projection of individual egotism), but would plan a social life in reference to something higher more for the sake of that contrast. In thus living for itself an aristocracy is rightly considered selfish . . . but intelligently so, like the scientist who pursues his investigations alone and yet benefits all society, or the poet and musician who voice their lyrical nature without thought of benefit to anything on earth and yet uplift mankind. As St. Jerome expresses it: "The man who lives for himself lives for the world." But it all depends on *how* he lives.

V

That a ruling class, or aristocracy, may become eccentric and fatuous by its own excesses and by misjudging its environment, is abundantly proved by history; and the French Revolution is, of course, the classic example of the annihilation of such a too-rigid organism. Thomas Jefferson, when as minister to

France his house was the meeting-place of the liberal aristocracy drafting the new Constitution, wrote: "The enlightened and liberal aristocracy are swamped by the fatuity of the main body in the country who, residing constantly on their patrimonial feuds and familiarized by daily habits with seigneurial powers, have not learned to suspect their inconsistence with reason and light."

The truth was that the stubborn right wing of the aristocracy, led by the King's scheming brother d'Artois, had become *specialists* in class – for men can specialize in caste as in business or law, and so limit their intellectual adaptability to the point of obstinate resistance to all change, becoming unconscious of their own decay as if anaesthetized for their final dissolution by a merciful destiny. This permitted their leadership to fall into the hands of the upper-class and professional men who discussed Rousseau in their literary societies and Jacobin Clubs; Puritans in deadly earnest transforming their fine-spun theology into legal and political principles for their own advancement.

No reasonable person will defend the main body of French aristocracy which, permitting an hierarchical classification of social functions to exceed what was inherent in nature, finally burst with its own fatuity; but it must be remembered that it was the eighteenth-century aristocrats who first took up the cudgels for liberty and democracy, gave form to the Revolution (the Duc d'Orléans, the Marquis de la Fayette, the Compte de Mirabeau, et cetera), and themselves perished only when the Puritans, self-seeking mass-men, got in power and established the Terror of the "legal" Tribunal. Jefferson and other

Southern sympathizers had supported the Revolution only because they believed that the people would select the liberal aristocracy as their leaders.

The English character is permanently Puritan and not confined to any period, first gathering the force which led to its recognition at the Reformation, to its energy during the Civil Wars, its momentary sovereignty under Cromwell's Commonwealth, and later (pursuing its futile aspiration after Absolute Good) affecting even after the Restoration the whole course of English life and thought. Most of the old nobility was annihilated by Henry VIII and Cromwell, and the new aristocracy was definitely Puritan in character. Even such of it as was not sympathetic with dissenters and egalitarians was untroubled by the French logic and consistency, and, readily acquiescing in the materialism of the mass-mind inevitably advancing to power, began to reinforce its class with professions and trades (as the Georgians imported their Pitts and established the polling-booth) in preference to the guillotine.

New England Puritanism, already deep-rooted when Cromwell was a country gentleman of St. Ives, went through no such convulsions as had English Puritanism (from which it had derived), so that its Protestant individualism took its natural course of popular democracy. Thus Calvinism was in New England both a religious system (in that it was actuated by conscious religious motives) and a political movement (in that its exponents sought to alter the form and substance of constitutional developments to accord with their religious tenets). The New England aristocracy was, of course, completely English; that is, it was fundamentally puritanic, imbued with the idea of "legal" rights, and thoroughly hostile to general ideas, libertarianism, and revolution. As the English aristocracy existed largely by its connection with the Crown, it was natural that in the American Revolution the New England aristocracy should have been somewhat Tory, both for temperamental and political reasons; never of great force in New England life, after the war the aristocracy ceased to be more than a tradition. New England had and doubtless still has her aristocracy, but it has never fulfilled any function as an American aristocracy since it has not been a solid ruling class – that class being the middle-class "quality" composed of the clergy, the professions, and the commercially successful.

In the South, conditions were vastly different. The South had been settled by the English, but they were the English Cavaliers, hostile to Puritanism. Moreover, the stock was strongly leavened with Scotch royalists and French Huguenots. Explosive by temperament and susceptible to general ideas, they were keenly sympathetic with France and worshipped French revolutionary theory.

A larger, stronger, and more self-conscious aristocracy than existed in New England, the Southerners saw that mere imitation of the older European societies was pretentious, and that a true American aristocracy must be both original and independent. Thus, while Toryism might be both aristocratic and conservative in England, in America it was artificially reactionary. In their new environment they had observed that the intellectuals had struck out in new directions (always a sure sign that the old order is moribund), and they began unconsciously to absorb the liberalism of the day – particularly that of John Locke and the Whigs who had established representative government and the right of revolution. (From the Revolution on, this form of liberalism—specifically, libertarianism—became the political philosophy of the South, occasionally combined with other but less congenial forms: the liberalism of the physiocrats, Adam Smith and the classical economists who fought for the principle of laissez-faire and industrial and commercial freedom; and that of the humanitarians, Voltaire, Beccario, Bentham, and others, who sought to improve humanity by protective laws for the weak.)

The Southern aristocracy, unlike the New England aristocracy, did not long resist or hesitate at putting a new native economy ahead of its class loyalty. As a matter of fact, it had little material interest to serve by a revolution: victory would accomplish little economic gain, whereas failure would mean ruin and ignominious death. It was not seeking a popular cause: the masses, to whom several generations of abuse are necessary to stir them into rebellion (and even then they are prone to attack weakness rather than tyrannical strength), were inclined to be loyal to old forms; and being handed back and forth between rulers (as Louis had handed Canada over to George) was of little consequence without other mental formulations to back a revolt. And, as a matter of fact, British tyranny was largely propaganda, the Royal governors having made a good showing on the whole, and being not unpopular except as agents of an inefficient British colonial system.

It was, rather, for an abstract liberty that the Southern aristocracy was willing to risk its existence. But since disembodied ideas without counterpart in social life get nowhere, it identified its ideas of abstract liberty with a new economic freedom necessary to develop the new native economy on which the American people were coming to depend; and in repudiating old hierarchical classifications for the sake of new ideals – in fine, in defending pure democracy and the right of revolution – it emerged from the conflict stronger in prestige and more solidly a ruling class. Its influence was continuous, if challenged, until the Civil War, when the Southern aristocracy was annihilated, not by democracy, but by the new middle-class industrial tyranny.

VI

Posterity has labelled the Southern aristocracy as artificial and inconsistent because it prated of liberty at the same time it upheld Stuart absolutism and the Church and drank confusion to Roundheads and regicides in its baronial halls; and extolled the ideals of democracy and the American and French Revolutions at the same time it held an inferior race in slavery.

The understanding of the paradox is, again, to be found in the connotation of words – in this case, of "liberty" and "democracy". Liberty is, to civilized men, always the sphere of action *limited* by civilization, religion, and the law . . . and thus limited, men can never be free. St. Augustine observes, "What can be more deadly to the soul than liberty of error?" Withdraw these limitations from liberty, and there remains only licence. Then the state must come forward to control that licence; the people must revolt when the state becomes tyrannical, and if they are successful they win . . . not liberty (since its safeguards, civilization, religion, and the law, have been lost) but mere freedom. Thus freedom is the objective of slaves, for there are no limitations to its demands.

As for democracy, if the state is to have one head, then logic and dignity demand that such headship be vested with absolute attributes – the meaning of the word *monarchy*. If, on the other hand, the state is to have no head, then the same logic and dignity demand that there be no head – the meaning of the word *anarchy*. (This was why Jefferson, in writing his epitaph, omitted all mention of his presidency.)

But while history has proved that liberty is best preserved by democracy, it has also shown that the domain of democracy is so delicate that it must perish between the cognate perils of despotism and anarchy unless a limitation is set upon it. Such a limitation is to be found only in an ordered and self-disciplined ruling class, or aristocracy, which preserves the social equilibrium and provides a code of honour (protected by good manners) that is superior to the positive law, so that thus protected a minority can live and act in defence of statecraft and liberty against despotism. Generally speaking, any class living in the light of an idea or by an ideal contains more select individuals than the masses, and so as a class is more capable of ruling.

The positive law is, therefore, a by-product of civilization, not its moulder. The lower type of man, the intellectually inflexible, who seeks to substitute individualism for aristocracy and convert the law into a means of serving the requirements of material success and prejudiced politics, ought to be rigidly excluded from making and perhaps even from interpreting the positive law. If a select-minded individual from the masses is first required to enter the aristocracy as a novitiate for ruling, the severe discipline of that status would make him indifferent to materialistic self-interest and thus the people would be protected against the vulgar conception of power which the self-made man is likely to have (for holding office relieves no man of his natural infirmities, and complete freedom to hold office is more often an excuse for freedom to serve one's own interests); and at the same time it would protect such a ruler from the caprices of the majority which tends to be more exacting than the most tyrannical aristocracy could ever become. In fine, unless the power of religion brings into liberty the principles of benevolence and love, and the power of *noblesse oblige* brings into authority the obligations of honour and purity, the self-made man loses the common touch when he walks with kings and becomes a petty tyrant in his determination to substitute political power for the social and intellectual power he lacks. Many a Cromwell has sought to overthrow the King in order that *he* may be king, and many a Calvin has repudiated the Pope in order that *he* may be pope.

In America, the only conspicuous example of an organized aristocracy that was at the same time a solid ruling class, was in the South. How well these aristocrats established the republic (no aristocrat ever thought of it as a nation), how well they defined its ideals, and how well they acquired the territorial domain and confederated it, is a matter of history and therefore of private opinion. But no one, I think, would seriously challenge the assertion that their private lives were honourable and dignified, their social life graceful and colourful, and their public attitude realistic and patriotic. They well knew with what they were contending: a growing middle class, ruthlessly materialistic, which would never rest until it had secured the control of the national finances and policies to further its own interests; but they chose to risk extermination rather than become absorbed.

Whether another American aristocracy will ever arise as a ruling class is, of course, still to be determined; but if one does, it will be the work of destiny, the return of the people to original American values, rather than of design, the conscious and arbitrary setting-up of a ruling class in which every ranting intellectual-reformer and every vulgarly fatuous plutocrat will think himself entitled to a place of power. For, in fearing revolution from beneath far less than hating reform from above, and in repudiating the greed of workers no less than the materialism of the wealthy, an aristocracy is in natural opposition to all values which tend to bring political power to a level with middle-class power and its invention, the Modern State, which in turn absorbs the spontaneous social effort that sustains and nourishes human destiny.

Scholarship Swallows Itself

Wilbur L. Schramm

Whenever I hear about the remarkable progress of literary scholarship in the last century I remember Jeff Calvin's snake story. While Jeff was camping in the Ozarks he saw a King Snake take its own tail in its mouth and begin to swallow. More and more of the tail disappeared, and the circle grew smaller and smaller and thicker and thicker. Finally there was hardly enough snake left to make a circle. Just then there was a loud popping noise. Jeff blinked. When he opened his eyes there was no snake to be seen. Now, says Jeff, he wouldn't swear to this, because he didn't actually see it, but the only way he can explain the sudden disappearance is that the snake completely swallowed itself.

It seems to me that literary scholarship is eating too much scholarship and is in considerable danger of swallowing itself completely and disappearing. The professors are right; there *has* been a tremendous progress in scholarship in the last century. In the last thirty years alone, the number of journals which carry the fruits of literary scholarship has more than quadrupled. None of these pays its authors, of course; almost none of them pays its own cost; and this may be an unhappy indication of the value of scholarship to the modern world — but, at least, they have every professor who wants to hold his job and every young assistant who looks yearningly at the heights of a professorship spending all their spare time — and perhaps some of the time they should spend on teaching — investigating Indo-European roots or Marlowe's death or Dr. Johnson's table manners. As a result we know considerably more about Indo-European roots and Marlowe's death and Dr. Johnson's table manners than we did one hundred years ago, and that is scholarly progress. But with this progress in scholarship, as someone has said, we are coming to know more and more about less and less, and those two progressions, as any mathematician will tell you, waste very little time in approaching infinity and zero. When we know an infinite amount about nothing, or an almost-infinite amount about next-to-nothing, then we may expect a loud pop, and we shall find that scholarship has swallowed itself and disappeared from the face of the earth.

Some perspective on our methods of scholarship may perhaps be gained by contemplating their course in the future if they continue the same lines. Today we are saving everything. One of our newspapers is even printing an edition on rag paper, in order that it may endure (I have just been looking over this morning's edition of that paper, and why anyone should want to preserve it, I don't know). We have absolutely no inhibitions about preserving things on paper; rather than ask, what is important? we save everything. We have incomparably more publications than ever before, and each one is being locked in its little library archive, there to await the investigator of the future. Our age is analyzing itself on paper, and saving the analysis. It is keeping its diaries, its letters, its advertisements. If there is a question as to whether a printed copy will last, it may be photographed and endlessly duplicated at a cost of a few cents per page. Portable recording apparatus is preserving every unpleasant dialect in the world, in order that in a few centuries a philologist may study the similarities of New Hampshire nasal *a* and Zulu uvular *wug*. Nothing is being lost; everything is being saved. And we have new things to keep — new methods, new sources. Psychology and psycho-analysis, for instance. It is of the utmost importance now to know whether one had a fixation on his mother's cousin's jumping rope, and whether he lived in a bungalow or a house with stairs; and whole books have been written on the single question, whether the ghost of Huck Finn was at Mark Twain's bedside when young Mark promised to be a good boy, the night after his father died. This is too much. The scholars of the future will have at hand such a mass of material that only by carrying modern methods to their ultimate and ludicrous limit will they ever be able to get through it.

The ordinary process of literary scholarship goes something like this: history, interpretation, criticism. Most of the scholarly midnight oil is burned over the first step; indeed, nine out of every ten scholars never get beyond that step before they burn out their supply of oil. Their first task is, of course, to choose a period and an author or a series of books. Then they proceed to find out as much as possible about the age, in order that they may set their writer or their books properly in environment. This done, they proceed to the life-history of the man, and thence to his books. How does he stand in relation to his time, to other times, and to other authors? What are the sources of his books? How do they express the age in which they were written? What are their influences on the books of succeeding ages? Then, of course, a reliable text of the books must be established. When the scholar has completed this, he can turn to the questions of interpretation. What has the author tried to do? What is the meaning of his books? What philosophy does he express? And, finally, the scholar can become a critic, point out defects and beauties, and decide whether or not the subject was worth studying, after all.

Suppose, for example, that our scholar is going to study Shakespeare. He will try first to capture the spirit of the Elizabethan Age, then investigate the fact of Shakespeare's life. He will consider the plays, their sources, relations to other plays and ideas of the times, and later borrowings from them. He will take the various quartos and folios and try to put together what seems to be the truest and best text of each play. Then he will be ready to interpret the ideas of the plays, and, eventually, to pass critical judgement.

This is no slight job, despite the fact that good source material on the Elizabethan Age is pitifully scarce and that we have so few documents bearing on Shakespeare's life that even a laundry receipt would be a major discovery. But it is not impossible. A good working knowledge of the Elizabethan Age can be got in a year, all we know of Shakespeare's life can be assimilated in three hours, and many PH.D. dissertations make worthwhile contributions to our knowledge of the plays. And Shakespeare, we must remember, was probably the most important of English authors, and he left us a mass of writings.

But consider the plight of the scholar who in 2134 sets out to write the definitive biography of Ernest

Hemingway. His first task will be to learn as much as possible about the age in which Hemingway lived. What a wealth of material he will have! There will, of course, be books like *Only Yesterday* and *Our Times*, but these must be checked from original sources. He must reconcile books as different as Mencken's *Notes on Democracy*, Adams's *Our Business Civilization*, and Sinclair's *The Jungle*. He must try to reconcile interpretations of the post-war psychology, expressions of the boom-time spirit, and wailings over the depression; Rex Tugwell's statement that we are returning to true democracy must be checked against counter-accusations that we are in a socialistic or dictatorial state — for all these statements will be there, every one of them. Every one of the newspapers must be studied. Every periodical must be examined for its reflection of the *Zeitgeist*. The psychology, philosophy, sociology of the age must be studied, and Dewey, Watson, Freud, and Jane Addams must be woven into a pattern, if that can be done. Government documents, in endless abundance, will yield the political history. The story of economics will be told by miles of statistics, painstakingly preserved. Millions of static and moving pictures will call the age up to the eye, and phonographic records will repeat its sounds and voices. Diaries and autobiographies and "personal revelations" will yield its personalities. And then, by the time our biographer has gone through a mass of later interpretations of the period, he will be ready to set Hemingway against his age.

How lucky, those students of Shakespeare! he will think. Those students of the Elizabethan Age, when there were no periodicals, no phonographs, preciously few books and pictures, and, above all, when nobody had the idea that everything must be saved for future scholarship! Or perhaps he will not. Perhaps he will be the true scholar who will exult in the wealth of his material, and, like the Oriental sculptor who started to carve a gigantic figure of Buddha the height of a whole mountainside, regret only that one lifetime allowed him no more time than enough to shape the toe of his idol.

When our biographer has analyzed the tangled strands of the early twentieth century, he will find God's plenty of material on which to base his life-story of Mr. Hemingway. It has been written about, reviewed, recapitulated. He must, of course, check and amplify these accounts. The newspapers have been kind to Mr. Hemingway. Our biographer can follow his every movement — whether bull-baiting in Seville or writing in Paris. People have seen him, written their impressions — and all these, of course, have been saved. Ben Jonson's remark, "small Latin and less Greek", was almost enough to characterize Shakespeare's education, but we can visualize our biographer bringing to light dusty report-cards — perhaps Mr. Hemingway will see this and destroy the evidence in time — to reveal that "Hemingway received a C in seventh-grade Arithmetic and a Failure in sight-singing the same year". Such microscopy will not be unusual in future scholarship. Was Hemingway a fluent speaker of Spanish? Is it true that Hemingway sometimes indulged his thirst in beverages stronger than coffee? The answers will be preserved, although our biographer may have to search from the Academia of Spain to the Hotel Ambos Mundos to get them. Official reports of Mr. Hemingway? Hundreds of them. We search for years in the dusty archives of the British Museum before we discover that Shakespeare appeared at a lawsuit, and from that record we interpret a considerable portion of his career. Yet, let Mr. Hemingway but be haled into traffic court, and the records will be there for eternity.

When Mr. Hemingway has been followed from New York to Paris to Madrid to Havana, from tea-table to bull-ring to typewriter and into his (what color? our biographer will know) pajamas every night of his what-we-hope-will-be-many years, then our biographer will be ready to get at the really personal side of his life. We don't know a thing about Shakespeare's personal life, but it will be of great importance that our biographer know whether young Ernest played with soldiers, and whether his mother wore hatpins, and just what dreams he had before he wrote *A Farewell to Arms*.

I pass in haste over other important researches our biographer might pursue. Mr. Hemingway's handwriting must be analyzed. His voice must be tested for pronunciation. His pictures must be scrutinized carefully, and his family tree studied. And then it will be time to think about his books.

Here I am somewhat bothered. I have observed in *The Sun Also Rises* a difference among the spellings of the word "fiesta". In some instances it is spelled with an *i*, in others, without. How will this problem of textual criticism be solved in 2134? I can envisage a long line of learned monographs. Was the author's knowledge of Spanish imperfect? Was it a typographical error? Was the language in a state of change? (A similar condition will be found in early Persian.) Was it a change for the sake of euphony, or politics, or nationalism? Was it merely the dialect of one of the characters? If so, there will certainly be a scholarly book on *Speech of Foreign Characters in Hemingway's Novels*; there are dozens such for every other age.

Our biographer will collate the texts of the books and stories — every edition, every reprint, for they will all be available. He will establish the Hemingway canon, seeking out from the files of the newspapers even the articles which were written as a correspondent.

Then he will consider the ideas and subjects of the writings and try to tie them into all the other strands of world thought. He will, for example, consider the sources. With Shakespeare we can point to two books — Holinshed and Plutarch — and thereby indicate the sources of half his work. But imagine our biographer trying to find all the sources of the war material in *A Farewell to Arms* or the bull-fighting stories of *Death in the Afternoon*! The sources will be there, if he can find them. All he need do is to find seven among seven billion. What is a needle in a mere haystack?

If our biographer is not exhausted by this time, he can start to answer the critical questions: what was Mr. Hemingway trying to do? how well did he do it? was it worth doing?

How long it would take to produce this well-rounded biography of Mr. Hemingway, beginning in 2134, I don't know, but I do know that it would be more than the work of a lifetime, even were the man a Methusaleh. He would have perhaps a thousand times as much information as we now have about Shakespeare. About any one of Mr. Hemingway's short stories he could write as much as we write of one of Shakespeare's plays. His material would be blinding, stupefying, overpowering. And it would not be because our age is any bigger or more various than past ages, but merely because we have a scholarly penchant for preserving everything and a scholarly insistence on using everything.

Scholarship will be facing almost the same problems as industry has been facing, and, if it is to continue mass production, it must organize and industrialize itself. In fact, we have already begun to build scholarship factories, in which the Board of Directors will determine the policies, the President will sign his name to the output, and the product itself will pass from floor to floor, room to room, on an endless belt, with each employe contributing a bolt or a stroke of paint, and caring nothing at all about the final result. There will be, for instance, the department of psychology on the seventy-sixth floor. When the case of Mr. Hemingway is conveyed to this department, it will be referred to the division of fixations, and, if it is suspected that the subject suffered from a fixation about his sixty-fifth month, it will be passed on to the specialist on fixations-in-early-life. This man will do his day's work, make his report, and pass on the material to the specialist on fixations-in-adolescence. And so the wheels of scholarship will gradually turn out a definitive biography of Ernest Hemingway.

The trend is toward more microscopic analysis, increasing specialization, dehumanization, and decentralization. Not one in ten of our scholars now asks himself, what is the end of all this work? and, has it anything useful to contribute? In other words, scholarship is divorcing itself from life, and when that divorce is complete, scholarship will vanish. This is a very real peril, and doubly ironic because scholars themselves are responsible for their plight. Too much scholarship, and too little of a selective nature. Scholarship *is* swallowing itself!

There are two alternatives to this melancholy prospect, it seems to me. Either we can develop our criticism to a point roughly commensurate to that to which we have developed our historical research, so that we may have some idea what is worth saving and what is worth studying, what study will contribute to our happiness and well-being, and what will contribute only to theses or professorships; or we may hope that the next war will be less conscientious about destroying things than we are.

Lands That Were Golden

II. The Two Old Wests

DONALD DAVIDSON

IF THE regions of Trans-Appalachia had been content to play the rôle of colonial dependencies to the masterful East, they would not now be regions in the new sense of the word. They have never for very long been so content. No matter what currents of opinion may pull them temporarily this way or that, in the end the telling force is the spirit of their own Hesperian lands and not the distant voices that, however clamorous, are still very distant, and often very strange. The destiny that shapes them is in part the compulsion of present desire, which changes somewhat with the times and men; but it is also the fulfilment of a history which to the Easterner of today must often seem as remote and almost as exotic as American history to an Englishman. The factual details of that history are well known; but it is nearly always presented as "national" history or "state" history. There has been little systematic attempt to isolate and interpret the history of the regions *as regions*, and to make it bear upon their present bias in matters cultural and economic. That, to be sure, is a difficult and hazardous undertaking, but until it is attempted, the relations between New York and the hinterland will continue to rest on a false basis.

The land beyond the mountains was populated originally by streams of migration from an East which at first was only too eager to say "good riddance", and to sell off, at a profit, lands in which persons no less eminent than Washington and Franklin were speculating. Of the various streams, the Southern one, which broke through the mountains into Kentucky and Tennessee, was the earliest. Indeed, at first it peopled the Northwest as well as the Southwest, and the states of the Old Northwest bear even today the marks of the powerful Southern invasion which was nearly a conquest. But the lands of the Western Reserve and other places attracted New England settlers, too; and after the defeat of the Indian tribes, the advance of men from New England and the Middle Atlantic states began in earnest. The Old Northwest attracted a fairly heterogeneous population: Yankees, Pennsylvanians, late-coming Germans, Southerners, and others. But the Old Southwest was homogeneous: it was settled almost entirely from Virginia and the Carolinas.

The first of American Wests, while exhibiting everywhere, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf, the characteristics of a single "frontier region", alike in customs and problems, which united under the leadership of Jefferson or Jackson to force its needs upon the attention of a reluctant East, was nevertheless from the beginning two Wests: a Southwest and a Northwest. The cleavage between North and South, on a line roughly indicated by the Ohio river, began very early. The Old Southwest represented a western transplantation of the political economy of Jefferson and the agrarian culture of the Old Southeast: that is, it included yeoman farmer, planter, and Negro slave, repeating in outlines sometimes cruder, sometimes bolder and more magnificent, the mixture of democracy and homespun aristocracy, of free labour and slave labour, that marked the equilibrium of the social structure from the Potomac to Charleston. The Old Northwest, at the outset a region of independent and highly Jeffersonian farmers, from which slavery had been excluded (technically, though not always actually) by the Ordinance of 1787, also developed an early interest in the commercial and manufacturing economy of the Old Northeast; but not until Douglas broke with Buchanan in 1857 did this interest become dominant and seal Northeast and Northwest in the political alliance which has constituted, to the Southern view, the "North" of 1861-1934.

He who would understand the regions today must find a way to visualize the old differences of origin as they affect present circumstances. He must remind himself that the states of the Old Southwest–Kentucky, Tennessee, and their neighbouring states of the Gulf Coast and the Mississippi basin – are decidedly Western and yet remain Southern; and that the states of the Old Northwest – Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and the states beyond–while in a sense Northern, retain, or in fact cherish, a Western antagonism to the East as firm as that of their Southern neighbours, and sometimes more intense. Although the Virginian of 1934 may sometimes unconsciously patronize his fellow-rebel west of the mountains, the two, as "Southerners", have a sense of unity and comradeship that will be lacking between a New Yorker and a Chicagoan, or a man from Springfield, Massachusetts, and one from Springfield, Illinois. A Bostonian who ventures no farther west than Ohio may be surprised to discover that even there the word *Yankee* is not always a complimentary epithet. In the South, indeed, the saying is that if you want to make a Middle-Westerner mad, call him a Yankee. As one goes farther west and south or west and north, either into the very self-conscious New Southwest (Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona) or the New Northwest, or the region of the coast, one is forced to realize that these younger regions (which are nevertheless old enough to be regions) are successive realizations and new adaptations of two geniuses that were from the beginning different.

Just how different are they, and how did the difference come about? Before answering such questions one must firmly disengage himself from certain fictions. Although the pioneers out of sheer material necessity sometimes put on leather breeches and built log cabins after crossing the mountains, they did not, as the Eastern legend would have it, by such acts immediately transform themselves into a new and singular human species. The notion of Western crudity, though superficially justified in a few particulars, is largely an Eastern rationalization of the East's own claim to superiority and power, and was already antiquated when Andrew Jackson entered the White House. The men of the Western waters, like the Eastern men, were eighteenth-century Americans who brought with them, almost intact, the only civilization they knew. They had no sooner arrived in the wilderness than they proceeded to set up again (much as the Englishman of the story put on his dress suit in the jungle) the manners, schools, churches, and political and economic instruments that they were used to. If anything, out of sheer excess of demonstration, they rather exaggerated these at first, somewhat to the horror of the East, which, in spite of the Revolution, was still not sure how far it really believed in democracy. The adaptation of the pioneers to the new lands and the differentiation of the regions came later, when the transplanted traditions had time to encounter the new situation. All the pioneers came seeking lands that were golden; and to all the pioneers the ownership of land — the only "real" property — was the prime condition of the liberty that everybody was talking about. All alike, too, had to conquer and dispossess the Indians, and deal with French, Spanish, or English occupation on their borders.

But the golden lands themselves, north and south, were different; the mastery and division of land took place in different ways; and the enemies were quelled, and the land was settled, under different conditions.

To reach Kentucky and Tennessee the pioneers had to cross the widest parts of the Appalachian range, itself a massive barrier that was also a kind of roadway, an actual wilderness serrated here and there by valleys and finally opening into limestone basins, like the Blue Grass of Kentucky and the Middle Basin of Tennessee, which in turn gave way to broken lands, everywhere heavily forested, that levelled gradually into plains or delta.

The genius of this land was in its great irregularity and variety, which both invited and repelled in its changing profile of mountain, plateau, hill, valley, plain, and swamp. It more or less enforced self-sufficiency and isolation upon settlers and settlements that were secluded by the very contours of the land.

The process of settlement was achieved, on the whole, rather by infiltration of families and individuals than by planned colonization. The Southern pioneers looked for their own land of Canaan and found it, in spite of the will of the home states rather than by their help. Their early tendencies were decidedly separatist. Before and during the Revolution they were improvising governments of their own, like the Lost State of Franklin in Tennessee, and but for the distant possessiveness of the home states on whose reputed territory they settled, the original states might well have numbered fifteen (or with Vermont, sixteen) instead of the famous thirteen. The improvised "states", when headquarters got alarmed, quickly gave way to quasi-counties, and after some years of quarrelsome agitation, to acknowledged states of the Union.

Another characteristic of Southwestern settlement was the irregular diffusion rather than the ordered concentration of the population. The cause of this was largely the Southern land policy, laissez-faire if not haphazard, which gave the best lands to first comers, and the worst to the last. Eighteenth-century Nashville was a negligible cluster of cabins on a river bank; but over many square miles around it were dispersed the isolated cabins, or "stations", or sometimes the veritable mansions, of highly individualistic persons who in literal Jeffersonian manner preferred the dangers of lonely dwelling to the corruptions of town life.

What these men were achieving was as far beyond the ken of the Federalists of 1790 as the doings of their children are lost upon the New Federalists of 1934.

Among Eastern statesmen it seems that only Thomas Jefferson understood, or half-way understood, the Western democrats who were quite truly "conquering the wilderness" and making continental America a reality. The Indians of the South were no more stubborn and dangerous than the Indians of the North, but they were less nomadic, more solidly planted. At no time did the Southwestern pioneers receive substantial help in their Indian-fighting from the government at Washington. No Revolutionary heroes were sent to lead them. No organized expeditions were sent from an Eastern headquarters to aid them. In their land it was individual settler against individual Indian; or it was hastily organized bands moving from Watauga or Nashville against Indian strongholds. It was frontier armies under frontier leaders like Sevier and Jackson that broke the Indian power in Tennessee and Alabama. The man of the Old Southwest quickly learned (what he was already disposed to believe) that in an emergency he would have only his own and his neighbours' valour to count on. The Federal government was so little a help and so much a hindrance that Sevier and Robertson at one time intrigued with Spanish governors, thus initiating a policy later to be called "Southern imperialism" and "cotton diplomacy".

Thus the spirit of the Old Southwest, which connected liberty with free-hold of land, also meant from the beginning that one defended one's own substance by one's own valour. By such valour (call it acquisitive if you will) the Southwest in general was extended and mastered. Save for the opening of New Orleans, little good came to the Southwest from the

Louisiana Purchase (which in the long run, in fact, worked against its interest) or from any similar governmental manipulation. What the Southwest won, it forced from the Federal government, or took from other governments, as it took Texas and the lands farther west from Mexico, in wars not highly acceptable to the Eastern standpatters.

The upshot of this long schooling was that to the Southwesterner all governments, and especially the Federal government, seemed not only external, but foreign, stupid, obstructive, slow. From such a government concessions might be wrung by loud protest or shrewd political manoeuvre; but for the protection of a man's substance and liberty, government did not compare in efficacy with the valour of one's own arm. In his suspicion of government the Southwesterner became more Jeffersonian than the Jeffersonians, and to this day he remains so. His valour, developed at times to the point of sheer pugnacity, became a habit which has had its fatality as well as its glory. For fifty years the Old Southwesterner fought Creeks and Cherokees on the eastern side of the Mississippi; and then, for another fifty years, he fought Apache and Comanche on the western side. Unaided by Federal troops the men of the Old Southwest fought the British at King's Mountain and New Orleans. Let it be noted that in both these battles they killed the commanding officers of the enemy forces and either captured or wrecked the opposing armies. During the same years, upon a little more provocation, they would almost as cheerfully have fought Virginia or North Carolina. Under Andrew Jackson they invaded and took Spanish Florida, in a manner shocking to the

Monroe administration, which was ponderously and (to the Southwesterners) quite incredibly arranging to *buy* that territory. Under Sam Houston, who had been governor of Tennessee, a Southwestern army captured the dictator, Santa Ana, routed his army, and reduced him to a comic-opera figure. Under William Walker, the "grey-eyed man of destiny", they filibustered and fought in Central America. At last, under the Confederate flag, they fought the armies of Grant and Sherman in the fiercest battles of all. By these, for the first time in their experience, they were ultimately defeated. For what it was worth, they had the satisfaction of knowing that the defeat was inflicted by armies composed largely of Northwesterners – men of their own breed – and led by Northwesterners; whereas Jefferson Davis, who had too grievously "gone Virginian", seemed incapable of discovering the Andrew Jacksons who ought to be leading Southwestern armies. After the War, they were at it again, with Ku Klux bands, night riders, feuds, and combats of every description.

The modern régime, apparently so substantial, offers very insubstantial foes to a man habituated to a fighting tradition. It is harder now to see one's enemy clear. The Southwesterner, so many times rebuked of late by persons who are careful to remain at a safe distance, seems to be in the predicament of John Crowe Ransom's Captain Carpenter, who in the poem of that title is heard—

Asking in the grimmest tone
If there was any enemy left to fight.

Yet the heroic tradition, if such it may be called, does not signify merely a blunt application of force, for it is as much a matter of spirit as of tactics. It means intensity of conviction, frankness of love or hate, above all an unwillingness to submit one's integrity to abstract dictation or to taint it with even the shadow of disloyalty to what one holds dear. These are emotional rather than intellectual qualities, and it would be proper to say that the Southwesterner's experience, backed by his land, his climate, his *mores*, turns the balance of his temperament toward the religious rather than the ethical, the intuitive rather than the logical, or, if you please, toward humour rather than wit. This does not mean that he has no intellect. He would swear that a man might be intelligent, or even wise, without being, in a certain sense, "intellectual". It does mean that he has little capacity for being intellectually disinterested. He must take sides, he must be a partisan, though surely not with any loss of chivalry and generosity. But doubt runs against his grain. He cannot so disprize human nobility as to surrender to scepticism. He can hardly concede that human nature is so wholly good or so wholly evil that it can be perfected or controlled by cold instrument of law. Collectivism, under whatever name, is bound to be incomprehensible to him. He cannot visualize a collective mass or have much notion of the class struggle in a world which to his eyes is a loose collection of individuals who must prove their worth to gain his respect. The putative good of society for him is something not to be discussed apart from the variable and breathing entities whom he knows as Cousin Tom, Uncle Dick, Brother Harry. He will follow to the death a leader who captures his imagination; but an elaborate theoretical scheme is likely to encounter in him a divine intractability that is one part sense of humour, one part suspicion, and one part refusal to concede that any external power has the final right to determine his coming and going, his doing or not doing. These are old American traits, cherished in the South, and magnified in a Western atmosphere. They make the Southwesterner poor material for a labour union or a farmer's co-operative, and not much better material for a trade association, though it ought to be said that he takes responsibility much better than he yields it.

The social reformer will see these traits as faults. They are stigmatized as backwardness. The frank cultivation of a free personality (unless couched in Freudian terms) is analyzed as a sloppy refusal to be efficient. In fact, it might as well be granted that the Southwesterner is not always a good manager. His farm land has often suffered erosion; his cabin on the hill, or his mansion in the valley, may be a little ramshackle, like his state government and his religion, which he simply does not bother to patch up. He is defective in the calculating principle, whose advent in the modern world Edmund Burke bewailed at the very moment when the Southwest was vigorously springing to life. Yet to instruct him in calculation (as New York wants to do) would certainly destroy the magnificence of spirit in which the Southwesterner has waged war for his convictions without reckoning the cost to himself. The penalty of the Southwesterner's participation in the War between the States was a destruction and impoverishment from which he has not yet recovered; and because of which he still cherishes a remarkably uncalculating resentment that does no good whatever to the tourist trade. The penalty of anti-evolution laws and Ku Klux performances (outbreaks of valour, perhaps, confused under modernism) has been a great outgushing of public opprobrium upon his uncalculating head. Other regions, more calculating, have hardly risked as much for their convictions. Would they? Will they ever? The Southwesterner waits to see. Meanwhile it is worth noting with what uncalculating devotion he follows the banner of Huey Long or Bilbo or Talmadge. Beware of using, too lightly or assuredly, the word demagogue. Is it possible that these leaders win him because they are men of deeds, and not stuffed shirts? Let the East look into that matter before it condemns too utterly. There is a Western principle of choice involved here which has had a meaning in American affairs.

Certainly, to the Irresistible Forces of modern times, moving, it would seem, in obedience to laws so hidden and obscure that even the calculators are amazed — to these forces, said to require prostration, the Southwesterner opposes a still dauntless breast. It will not be easy to convince him that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness can be reduced to such pale equivalences as are represented in statistical tables. Not for such equations was he born of Highland Scottish or English blood. Hardly can he, of all men, be expected to keep a straight face before such hieroglyphics. Only for manners' sake, and that in very high company, will he refrain from laughter.

What do such abstractions mean when he strides away from office or field, with the sun on his shoulders, and looks at the hills, whose every fold in the blue distance both hides and discloses lands that are still golden, whether one seeks them for refuge or adventure. Here, though there be old battlefields at every step, or new highways riving the green with a scurry of motors, no fatality broods, but every prospect invites with the notion that happiness is not only pursuable but tangible. One has only to pitch his house on a fair piece of rising ground, in a grove of oaks or hackberries, and happiness is already touched. Let there be a fence around the grove, with a gate that opens upon a boxwood walk leading to a high-columned porch. And between fence and road let there be a pasture for the horses, with a creek flowing in it, and limestone outcroppings, and iron-weed scattered about (who cares?) and blackberries in the fence corners. Let there be fields of corn to left and right, and beyond them a high hill, well forested, a range for turkeys only half tame, and for 'possum and 'coon that are wholly wild.

This is perhaps only a Kentucky-Tennessee version of happiness and liberty located and made real. But in one form or another, with the details changed only a little, it represents the eternal desire of the Southwest: location, elbow-room, a citadel, a family hearth. This is the stand from which he watches the approach of the Irresistible Forces. Before this he has heard of invaders bloodthirsty and invincible, and he is impressed only to the extent of reflecting that it has been a while since he has had a good fight. What do the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, or the Planned Economy, have to do with the unconquerable irregularity of his nature, or with the mighty land unrolling, as ungovernable as himself, from the Great Smoky

Mountains to the Father of Waters and the Staked Plains? But let them come on, if they will, and he will be ready with his rampart of cotton-bales and mud, and his line of rifles that do not miss. Let no man think that there are no modern equivalents of these rude defenses. Already, to Secretary Wallace's appeal for economic nationalism, Peter Molyneaux of the *Texas Weekly* has answered:

> No national policy, no matter how beneficial it may be for even a majority of the people of a country, can be squared with any humane conception of civilization, if it has consequences for one section of the country as inexorably destructive . . . as the policy of economic nationalism must be to the people of the South. Not only should not the people of any section be expected, in the name of national welfare, to sacrifice so much . . . but no nation, calling itself humane and civilized, should maintain a policy that requires such sacrifice. If the truth must be told, the South has already sacrificed too much that this policy might be maintained.

In those sentences there is already a crack of Kentucky rifles – or is it a flash of Texas Bowie knives? And sometime before Mr. Molyneaux's defiant utterance, twelve Southerners published a book, called *I'll Take My Stand*, which attacked the economic and cultural premises of the Eastern industrial programme. The twelve, without exception, belong to the country west of the mountains. Mr. Molyneaux and these men are not alone.

II

In the Old Northwest, and throughout the Middle West which is its extension, the Irresistible Forces also move, in a tidal wave more vast and rapid than in the Southwest. In other days the Northwesterner would have met this wave with a fierce rampart, and men from Kentucky and Tennessee would have helped him to guard it. Today he builds no rampart. Yet he does not flinch from the wave. He rides it, with perfect equanimity and Western cheerfulness. When it passes on, there he is, unchangeably reposing on the bosom of his prairies. Yet his equanimity, it must be said, diminishes somewhat, and his passion tends to increase, as the meridian of social forces moves west. Near the Rockies, or in fact at almost any point west of the lake region, he is likely at times to be as obstreperous as his Southwestern brother.

If we take the Great Lakes region as a starting-point, the reasons for equanimity are visible and not in the least obscure. The golden lands into which the Northern pioneers – and some Southern ones – came are a region of plains, level or slightly rolling, originally an expanse of grassy prairie thickly wooded in the east but thinning into treeless aridity west of the Mississippi. Toward the south, in the neighbourhood of the Ohio river, the land is much more broken. This is the part that was settled from Virginia and the Old Southeast. The levelness of the northern part and the smooth nicety of contour that the occasional elevations possess are a result of the six great invasions of the glacial ice sheet in prehistoric times. The fertility of these plains, everywhere more pronounced and more consistent than in the Southwest, is due to the same general cause. In the long winters, when the winds whip down upon him with unbroken sweep from Hudson's Bay and the Pole, the Northwesterner may reflect (for he loves to cherish odd bits of scientific lore) that an average lowering of temperature by a very few degrees would bring the Great Ice Age upon him again. That would be a really irresistible force, the thought of which makes social forces puny in comparison. But in the summer, the hot breath of the Gulf comes up with equally unbroken sweep, and he may well wonder whether the desert may not catch him sooner than the glacier. Between the two threats of fire and ice, what temper of mind serves better than equanimity?

But the Northwestern pioneers thought little of deserts and less of ice sheets. They saw rich prairie lands, comparatively easy of access, whether one came through the Mohawk Valley, as many New Englanders did, or by the Cumberland Road, or, as did the greater number at first, on the flatboats and keelboats that bore whole families down the Ohio to Hesperian landings. By the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 a path of entry was wide open to the Eastern folk – and to the commercial out-reach of New York City, which from that moment eclipsed its rivals and waxed mighty. Not only was this land easier of access than the land farther south; it was more penetrable; it was less a wilderness; in fact it was a fairly open and manageable country, where "planning" rather than ruggedly individualistic growth fitted the topographical situation.

From the beginning such planning was in the order of settlement; and planning was a good deal easier in that new country than in the old ones where it is now being tried. The Ordinance of 1787 is a startling example of "regional planning" – a thing so neatly imagined and accomplished that it might well produce tears of envy in the harried National Planner of 1934. Unlike the Federal legislation covering the territory of the Southwest, which simply acknowledged an already existing situation, the Ordinance of 1787 laid out, for future realization, a scheme of five states, whose lands would be open for homesteading and into whose territory the importation of slave labour was expressly forbidden. This latter provision, against which the Southern elements of the Northwest chafed in vain, marked off the region from its Southwestern neighbour, and combined with climate, soil, and economic bias to predestine not only the character of the Northwest as "free soil" but its rôle in the sectional conflict of later years.

Here was the basis of what the historian calls an "American colonial policy", since it furnished a precedent for the erection of Western territories into full-fledged states. But the planning did not end there. Out of the Land Ordinance of 1795 there grew, after some argument, a fairly well-formulated policy of land division. By a quite Rooseveltian stroke, it was arranged to abash the speculator and aid the not-yet-forgotten man by offering the land in small parcels. Furthermore, the division was ultimately on a mathematical township basis, and the use, or usufruct, of section sixteen of every township was consecrated to public education.

There were, of course, ambitious colonization schemes and grandiose speculations; but they amounted to little in the end. And though the actual settlement, here as in the South, was at first a matter of the infiltration of individuals and families, the

Northwest as a whole was settled under Federal guidance, Federal guarantees, and Federal protection. Here were no valiant mushroom states or improvised republics, avowedly separatist and a little belligerent, but lusty, orderly territories growing into a pattern of statehood already cut out for them. And the Eastern government, irritated though it might be by Western clamour, never ceased to show some paternal solicitude for the Northwestern settlers in their Indian wars. The government sent General Anthony Wayne, no less, to quell the first great uprising; he brought an army recruited and trained in Pennsylvania. Later, the might of Tecumseh was broken by William Henry Harrison with an army of frontiersmen to which the Federal government added a quota of regulars and its material support. Let us not forget, too, that the men of Kentucky and Tennessee came up to help on certain occasions.

The War of 1812, which hurt New England seaports, was as popular a war in the Northwest as it was in the Southwest; but except for Commodore Perry's victory on Lake Erie, it was a rather dragging, unsatisfactory performance in the Northwest. The results, however, were satisfactory. It extinguished both the British and the Indian menace at one blow, and opened the lands farther west to easy settlement – and to more planning. After that, the only wars the Northwest engaged in were fought outside its own borders. They were undertaken – as the Northwest's part in the War of the Sixties was undertaken – with the strange mixture of disinterestedness and calculation which is today the most mysterious and formidable element in the spirit of the Old Northwest.

The paternal support that the Northwest won from the Federal government helped to shape its genius and to distinguish it from its Western sister-region in the South. The man of the Northwest, like his Southern kinsman, came seeking free lands; for him, too, the conception of liberty found expression in the freeholding of the most substantial form of property. But the Northwesterner learned to think – and since pioneer times has with growing enthusiasm believed – that the function of a government, especially of a national government, is to safeguard one's substance against destruction or alienation. One can of course defend his substance with his own body, and if necessary will do so vigorously. But what is a government for, if not to save you that effort? Your own strength ought to go into the substantial things that express your privateness and worth.

This notion, thrifty and reasonable, is basically a New England conception. It is Brother Jonathan's idea of a national government that is supposed to function like an enlarged town meeting. After 1820, indeed, when the gathering controversy between North and South had been smoothed away by the Missouri Compromise, the Western kin of Brother Jonathan had already begun to shape the temper of the Northwest. In the Western Reserve itself, a kind of subregional planning was going ambitiously forward, and the New England culture spread rapidly west and south over the plains, mingling sometimes chaotically, but more often persuasively, with the culture that came from the Middle Atlantic States or the Kentucky side of the Ohio.

The Old Dominion and others sent out the greater number of colonists; but New England sent out more institutions. The New England influence thwarted the early Northwestern development toward county government (the Southern idea) and determined the culture of the Old Northwest as a culture of towns and townships imposed upon an original stratum of yeoman farmers, and overlaid, in our time, with a third stratum of metropolitan centres. The same genius, no doubt, laid out towns in orderly rectangular patterns, planted elms on all the streets, decreed parks and schools and libraries and churches at all the right places. It brought in the New England zest for public education and set up colleges that were Western transplantations of Harvard or Dartmouth. Above all it brought the New England economy of manufactures and trade, the doctrine of "internal improvements" at Federal expense, and the high protective tariff.

But observe what happens to this culture and its institutions in a Western atmosphere – in a plains region where few natural obstacles hinder the expansive process. Everything is tremendously magnified. New England caution becomes the very special kind of disinterestedness that is Northwestern – or now, Middle Western. That is, it develops from a deft avoidance of troublesome differences or a prevision of them, into a large and overwhelming assumption that there are no differences. The mixture of populations and traditions in the Old Northwest must have had something to do with the growth of this quality; for the Germans, the Irish, the Scandinavians, the Slavs have poured in upon the Yankees, the Southerners, the Middle States men. In the East the mixture, which is even more diverse, now breeds a kind of cosmopolitanism; in the Middle West it becomes, among other things, Rotarianism. This is a kind of idealism, not so bad, perhaps, as its critics have painted it; but it is also a protective mask for a good deal of inward doubt. Middle-Western uniformity, so much talked about, is not a dull craving for averages, but a necessary assumption, a pure convenience of behaviour in a world where it is better to let the sleeping dogs lie.

As for Brother Jonathan's villages, they grow in the Middle West into little cities that crowd upon one another in decorous multiplication, or that grow up into metropolises. The shipshape neatness of Brother Jonathan's arrangements becomes the good order of streets that never could have started out as cow-paths, that obviously obey the principle of the surveyor's line projected across a level surface. What was Yankee handiness becomes the principle of convenience and comfort. There is no trick of convenience that these towns do not possess. There is no conceivable mechanism of Brother Jonathan's modest industrial revolution that they have not improved upon and greatly enlarged. The East thought of factory production; but the Middle West thought of Fordism and mass-production. The Connecticut Yankee got up the wooden nutmeg; but the Middle West devised salesmanship. What is Eli Whitney's lone cotton-gin beside the teeming inventions of Edison of Ohio, who might be said, almost, to have invented the idea of invention? As for public education, the Middle West fosters not only public schools but state universities gigantic beyond the dreams of Harvard and Yale. Then there is Prohibition. How could it ever have been mistaken for simply a crass reversion to Puritanism? It was much more the transcendentalism of the latter-day Yankee saints, a perfectly logical and innocent Western attempt to unshackle man from the clogs that Emerson was always wanting to strike off. Really, that wispy creature, transcendentalism, never took a deep breath till it struck Kansas air. Poor Richard might have said: "Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well." And the Old Northwest added: "And on a lârger scale . . . to the last point of logic."

The capacity of the Old Northwest for magnifying, or indeed universalizing, its ideas is one of its most striking characteristics; and perhaps a dangerous one. In the sectional quarrel that finally ranged the Northwest against the South, Douglas's argument of "popular sovereignty" was good Western democratic doctrine, Jacksonian, fair, and fervent; yet it missed the temper of the Old Northwest somehow. Lincoln's argument – "This government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free" – was a universalizing of the importance of free labour and free soil to the Northwest. It went beyond the New England idea, it violated the old conception of sectional equilibrium, it was the most dangerous thing that could have been said, and the one thing that made war inevitable. This statement, apparently so disinterested and yet so daring, put the South in the awkward position of a seeming moral offender. In the War itself, Lincoln, a Northwesterner, furnished political and moral leadership to a panicky East; and Andrew Johnson, a Southwesterner, succeeded him. The North's most successful military leaders were the two Northwesterners, Grant and Sherman, who dropped the polite military orthodoxies of the East and devised obliterating, massive, daring evolutions on a grand scale. Like the march of Henry Ford's machines, these movements were glacial, crushing, and yet somehow fervent. . . .

Upon the Prairie Plains of the Ohio country, or the Great Plains farther west, the charm of nature, indubitable enough in its enormous features, such as skies, horizons, stretch of earth, nevertheless repels man from tender intimacies. Thoreau in Ohio is as unthinkable as Wordsworth on the Congo. It is not a place for philosophical relaxation, but for the serious activity that reassures man with a sense of his individual power. On the plains one cannot imagine so casual and unserious a figure as the Southern tenant farmer who will live in philosophical toleration of an unkempt house so long as he can possess, however temporarily, one small fruitful field, and hunt, loaf, and talk with neighbours. The man of the Old Northwest is not now impressed, if he ever was, with the vastness that weighs upon Eastern or Southern visitors, or with the sense of infinite fatality that would set a Thomas Hardy to brooding. The Northwesterner is not a Robinson Jeffers, to be overborne by vastness, or a Whitman to be exalted by it. He has much more optimism than fatalism, but it is an optimism backed by Western resolution. He does not decline to look at obstacles, but he declines to believe that obstacles cannot be overcome. The defence of the Southwesterner's integrity is valour; the Northwesterner, no less a preserver of integrity, calls on his resolution to the same end. His Western faith, once more zealous and expansive than it is now, has sometimes dropped into the sentimental optimism of Mr. Babbitt or Bruce

Barton; a Western transcendentalist is bound to have his little weaknesses.

But his will, as the real armour of his integrity, endures. It is buttressed by a calm often mistaken for stolidity and by his faculty for taking a disinterested view. Vastness cannot be shut off from lonely farms whose very principle of existence calls for sociability and good nature; the Jeffersonian ideal of the independent farmer does not somehow turn out well in the Great Plains country (though nearer the Ohio or the Great Lakes it often flourishes). In the Great Plains it yields to mechanized farms, which express the will of man dominating nature rather than coming to terms with it. But from towns and cities vastness can be and is shut off. In them one may achieve comfort, and a kind of splendour, and the solid reassurance of walls, streets, houses. Vastness can be conquered, too, by machines of tremendous mobility. The railroad is an Eastern idea of mechanized transport; the automobile and airplane are the Northwestern or Western idea. New York has not yet visualized the change they are bringing about.

And so on to whatever things may be rated as good by the instrumental measurements of social utilitarianism — these things are the Northwesterner's, for they may be obtained by an effort of the will. What state leads the Union in the number of schools, roads, automobiles, and radios in proportion to population? Is it Iowa, or is it Wisconsin? The imponderables, it may be, are not to be gained by will alone. But ponderables have their importance, too. In a land without landmarks, measurement is both necessity and virtue. The imponderables cannot be measured, the ponderables can be. The earth must be gashed for iron, or its surface ravaged to produce wheat, or hidden to make a city. If the result is ugliness, drought, congestion, stockyards, slums, these things, like Sherman's march to the sea, are necessary if regrettable products of the out-reaching of the Northwestern will after things that can be measured.

But how does all this fit Western transcendentalism? That is the mystery; and the Easterner will probably never understand it. Vachel Lindsay understood it. He could see the golden censers swinging over Springfield and hear a Western music in motor-horns on the Santa Fe trail. There are other Old Northwestern cities where the censers swing, or have swung: Indianapolis and Cincinnati are surely among them. If the censers do not swing so perceptibly over Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, let no Easterner therefore imagine that they are fit habitations for Decadence and Dissociation. They are Western market-places, frankly going about their business; and they know that a metropolis is dependent upon a rich and friendly hinterland.

At any rate, any doctrine, whether of art or politics, that denies the capacity of the human will to surmount obstacles, is not going to please the Old Northwesterner. It is a temperamental impossibility for the Old Northwesterner to say, "Thy will be my will". For this reason, perhaps, his religion tends to be not religion but ethical culture. He fears passivity and relaxation. It is significant that Sherwood Anderson, in *Dark Laughter*, makes one of his characters rail against the feeling of impotence that modern civilization forces upon him. The modern Southerner rejects Communism as an insult to the dignity of man. The

Old Northwesterner rejects it because it requires an almost Oriental annihilation of his individual human will – and is impractical. As for the famous radicalism of the West, that is only a continuing expression of the Old Northwesterner's idea of the function of a government. It is a habit, not a political philosophy.

Ten years ago, although Eastern critics conceded that life in the Middle West had all the appointments of civilization, it was berated as dull and unpicturesque. And life in the Old Southwest, though admittedly picturesque, if not almost too exciting, was condemned as lacking in the very modern refinements that, in the Old Northwest, accompanied dullness. There is something here to puzzle over. Is it possible that life cannot be both civilized and exciting? Ought the South to be Mid-Westernized, or the Middle West to be Southernized? These are foolish questions, which can be answered only by saying that the East is not a good judge of what is dull, civilized, picturesque, exciting, or backward in the regions it does not take the trouble to understand. The yokel and the Babbitt are Eastern myths, as difficult to isolate in flesh and blood as the European notion of what an American millionaire, cowboy, or Fundamentalist is like.

Once the two regions were outposts of Eastern ideas coming from North and South – ideas that in their earliest transplantation looked terrifying and extreme to Eastern eyes. But what once made *Western* synonymous with *radical* and *dangerous* is now conservatism of a sort that makes the new Eastern blood impatient. The outposts have become bulwarks. America must now suffer whatever inconveniences must result from having its continental bulwarks so far away from the commercial capital on the eastern edge and the political capital on the mid-southern edge. From these peripheral spots the irresistible forces may indeed move, as they have moved before. In the Old Northwest and beyond they will have to encounter the figure of a man of English or Scottish blood, with a little German added, and a little Scandinavian maybe, and with a New England conscience to top the whole. This man has learned all too well the lessons that the Adams family and Ben Franklin have had to teach. In the great cities of the lakes, or the towns of the plains, or among the great fields of the plains, or by the rivers he stands, intent upon the massive work and the good job that he bends to his severe and yet ardent will. And in the Old Southwest a figure moves among mountains and hills, or in the deep forests or cotton lands of the Gulf, with songs on his lips, and tales of old time, and often with a gun in the crook of his arm, and a certain look in his eye like an orator's or poet's. At times he seems, like the Man on Horseback that James Truslow Adams has feared, a grim and turbulent giant – at times, a friendly companion.

But both the figures are indubitably there, perhaps immovably there, in regions that suit their being. Not soon will they cease to be the incarnations of the Old Adam, that, like Brother Jonathan in Vermont or Cousin Roderick in Georgia, make the diversity of America a permanent and an incalculable reality. To those who say, smiling indulgently, that these figures belong to a past no longer relevant, there is at least one proper answer: the answer of Santayana, who said: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

Mr. Krutch and Europe

Ross J. S. Hoffman

A series of essays treating of the cultural conflict raging in our times recently appeared from the pen of that engaging writer, Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch. They were published in the *Nation* under the title, "Was Europe a Success?", and they contained rather more thoughtful substance than might be suggested by so odd a caption. The author of *The Modern Temper* is still an unhappy, disheartened, and pessimistic liberal who can see little ahead for his school, save perhaps fighting a rear-guard action against gathering forces of destruction. The substance of these essays is not unfamiliar, but a special interest attaches to them because Mr. Krutch is our foremost prophet of despair and because he can discern more clearly than most liberals the ultimate implications of contemporary revolutionary movements.

He has been gravely impressed by the fact that "nothing is more characteristic of much contemporary thought than its tendency to be literally 'radical', that is to say, to carry its criticism on to a point where it becomes, not a criticism of certain defects or maladjustments of society, but by implication at least a criticism of the whole complex of institutions, traditions, and standards of value . . . within the meaning of the term 'Europe' – and which is, indeed, almost exactly what is now more often referred to as 'bourgeois civilization' ". It is Mr. Krutch's quite correct realization of this fact that provoked him to write these essays. He recognizes what so many other liberals fail to see, namely that the success of Russian Communism "depends not only on a new form of government but also on both the destruction of 'European' culture and the creation of a new man"; which new man, "if he ever actually came into existence, would be really new, taxonomically a mere variety of *Homo sapiens*, but no more than the ancient Mayan man identical with the man of European philosophy or poetry". Therefore, says Mr. Krutch, "the issue is both clearer and more fundamental than that which is commonly drawn between the various schools of political opinion. . . . Behind the impatience of the champions of a new beginning and behind the caution of those liberals who hesitate to abandon too quickly or too completely certain accustomed ways, lies the willingness of the one to cut loose from the European soul as well as the European political system and the fear of the other that certain achievements of that soul — unique in the general history of mankind — will not easily be duplicated". A whole culture is at stake: "something which includes not merely a way of life and a heritage of philosophy and art but the very sensibilities and forms of thought which made that heritage possible. . . . By the revolutionists themselves we are forbidden to suppose that only our material possessions — if we happen to have any — are threatened, or that — if we have none — there is 'nothing to lose but our chains'. Something else is threatened and that something we may agree to designate by the convenient word 'Europe' ".

Few thoughtful persons, I venture to say, would care to deny that, in making these observations, Mr.

Krutch is substantially right. Nor would there be many to dispute his statement that "the man which Europe produced realized more of his potentialities than did the man developed in any other portion of the globe". We can certainly agree with Mr. Krutch that "the European man has been the most successful in exploring that realm of consciousness which appears to be exclusively human". There are a number of statements in these essays that strike the mind as true and even penetrating, as for example that "Europe" today is "threatened quite as definitely by 'liberals' and 'reformers' as it is by radicals – the only difference between the two being that the one is slowly undermining the foundations without knowing what he is about while the other is deliberately blowing them up". I might select several more passages to illustrate this power of Mr. Krutch's mind to probe below the surface of things, but the distressing fact would remain that the essays as a whole actually do not show Mr. Krutch probing very deep.

The first reason for saying this is that Mr. Krutch has left us in perplexity as to what "Europe" and "European man" are. At one point he makes mention of "that European spirit which was born in Athens, rationalized in Rome, and taken over by the Catholic Church"; which would seem to imply that "Europe" and "European man" were formed by the classical heritage and the Christian faith, as indeed they actually were. But at other points Mr. Krutch writes of the Christian Middle Ages almost as if his "European man" were then non-existent. This man, he tells us, first appeared in Greek antiquity and then was almost destroyed when the civilization of the ancient world went down; "it required", according to Mr. Krutch, "between 1000 and 1500 years for him to begin the re-establishment of himself". The implication here is that "European man" is not at all the product of the Middle Ages, but is identical with a certain kind of man in antiquity who re-emerged in modern times by sloughing off something that must necessarily have been non-"European". Yet in describing some of his characteristics Mr. Krutch stresses certain marks which betray quite plainly the Christian origin of this man. "One of them is a sense of the reality, the worth, and the sacredness of the individual, who is thought of as having in himself a value for which there is no equivalent." This was not a characteristic of the ancient Greek; its origin lies in Christian doctrine; whether he knows it or not the modern European who has this characteristic has simply saved an old coin out of the Christian treasury. And very much the same may be said of another characteristic which Mr. Krutch attributes to his "European man": "a similar sense of the importance of something which has been variously defined but always called 'freedom' for this same individual". For the European who prizes this freedom does so because the Catholic Church fought all the fatalists of history in behalf of the doctrine of free will; this too is part of the Christian capital upon which the modern world is still living. But Mr. Krutch's "European man" has also some essential characteristics which are by no means Christian. For example, he regards "progress and achievement as a movement away from the usual, the norm, the universally acceptable", and he is attached to the "intellectual luxury" of a non-partisan, spectator-like detachment from the turmoil of social conflict. These are plainly the marks of the uprooted modern bourgeois intellectual, torn loose from the old religion and corporate life of Christendom: a man who has been very conspicuous upon the European scene since the close of the Middle Ages. Mr. Krutch's "European" thus appears to be essentially the modern liberal who nourishes a few surviving Christian prejudices, and who has enjoyed until fairly recently a comfortable life in a civilization which he now finds himself unable to defend.

I do not believe that Mr. Krutch could fairly accuse me of having disfigured or caricatured his European man in what I have just said. It would, however, be quite easy to take some of his statements and with them to construct a definition of his European man that would be very absurd. It would include the ancient Greeks, but exclude the modern Catholics; it would leave out Aquinas and Dante, but include Spinoza, Freud, and Einstein; it would exclude the peasants of Spain and the Pope of Rome, but it would include Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch; indeed it would claim Europe for the pagans, the Jews, and the heretics, and expatriate all the Christians. Certainly Mr. Krutch thinks of his man as being most "European" before he was Christianized and after he became wholly or partly de-Christianized; as a Christian Mr. Krutch manifestly does not like him very well, nor regard him as quite "European". Dante, for example, was guilty of "bigotry".

Mr. Krutch, of course, is far too liberal to make these exclusions, but it must be said that he is so only because he has not got a clear idea as to precisely what he means when he speaks of Europe. Indeed he does not appear to mean anything more definite than that Europe is something he is fond of, something that is emotionally congenial to his spirit. Europe has something that is suitable to human nature, and especially to his own human nature. He likes its humanist tradition, its rich variety of material and intellectual culture, and he doubts if a radically different kind of man could match these creative achievements. In the tangled story of Europe Mr. Krutch has a fascinated interest, but he has not untangled that story and rendered it intelligible. If he had he would not discern European man in the ancient Greek; nor would he equate European civilization with Greek civilization. It is perfectly true that European civilization is the outcome of an organic growth continuous from antiquity, but it is not true that Greece was Europe; nor was the ancient Greek a European; he only helped to make the European. The cultural community that is Europe came into existence as the society of Christendom during the Middle Ages, and because this society had a new theory of the meaning of man it formed a new and very different man from the man of antiquity. It was this new man who made Europe, who gave it its distinctive character, and who alone is therefore entitled to be called the European. Periclean Athens was not Europe, nor was the pagan Roman Empire; but Christendom was Europe and it has never abandoned the rather disconcerting habit of reminding us every so often that it still is Europe. This is the great fact that Mr. Krutch has evidently never probed deep enough to discover, although he may have had some fleeting glimpses of it; and it is his confusion on this point that explains the weakness of his whole series of essays. The radicals whom he fears so greatly are clearer and more fundamental in their thinking than he is; they could tell him what Europe really is. They prove their knowledge when they aim their heaviest blows at its foundation source of strength; it is because they know that Europe is Christendom that they are so fiercely at war with its religion. They know that once that is extinguished the rest of the work (demolishing Mr. Krutch's denatured and anaemic Europe) will be a quick and easy job.

Had Mr. Krutch a clearer understanding of the essential substance of Europe, I do not think he would take it so lightly for granted that the last war was a great European failure. "No failure", he says, "could be more utter than the failure which culminated in the World War, and it may seem hard to believe that any one could insist without irony upon the necessity of saving that civilization." But this statement makes sense only on the assumption that the War was a suicidal convulsion of European civilization, whereas it is quite possible that the War actually was a demonstration of the vitality of that civilization. There is, for example, the overthrow of the anti-European Prussia and the resurrection of Catholic Poland and Bohemia; one thinks also of Ireland. The empire of the Moslem Turks was destroyed and the mediaeval nationalities of eastern and central Europe came to new life. Italy experienced a veritable return of the Romans, and the ascendancy of Europe came back to its ancestral home in the Latin lands of the south; Rome recovered her old pivot position in Europe; the way was paved for the liberation of the Pope, and the Catholic revival gained fresh strength. "What really happened in the world", as Mr. Chesterton has shrewdly pointed out, "is the reawakening of old places and the return to old shrines." Even in Germany, it is possible to interpret the War as opening the way for a renewal of popular national life unknown since the Middle Ages, for we may come in time to see Hitler as representing something so deep-rooted in German tradition that beside him the Hohenzollerns are mere upstarts. I would not insist upon this interpretation of the War, but it may be said that it is the only really intelligible meaning that any one has ever read into that great conflict. And if it is the true meaning of the War, then the War was not a European failure but a quite considerable success.

Again it is Mr. Krutch's failure to probe through to the true Europe which accounts for his unfortunate error of finding evil fruit growing upon good trees and good fruit borne by evil trees. As a first example of this, he says: "Not only did chivalry bring slaughter, and religion bring persecution, but the very cultivation of intellect and beauty always implied their cultivation at the expense of thousands shut out from the enjoyment of the arts or even the comfort of adequate goods." Now everything in that statement is wrong – so wrong in fact that it is very hard to excuse an intelligent man for making it. Chivalry did not bring slaughter. The barbarized world of the early Middle Ages was certainly full of slaughter, but this was actually abated as the chivalric ethic came to the fore. Chivalry arose as the Church gradually attained some success in transfiguring the mere warrior into a defender of society and directing his energies toward better ends. He was enlisted under the patronage of the Queen of the Saints and taught a more righteous and discriminating use of the sword. Chivalry, in brief, was a great effort to crush mere cold-blooded slaughter, and it bequeathed to Europe its finest moral tradition. It is equally a distortion of the truth to say that religion brought persecution, unless Mr. Krutch means (as he obviously does not) the persecution of religion by an opposing and hostile world. The Church fought its enemies, to be sure, and with weapons characteristic not of its own essential nature but of the successive ages through which it has lived; but it did not introduce coercive persecution into the world, and the social action of its ethic was always in the direction of leading men toward a life of peace and brotherhood. There have always been men who commit grievous abuses in defence of religion, but its noblest exemplars have never been persecutors. Nor is it true to say that the cultivation of intellect and beauty have ever implied the deprivation of the good things of life from the mass of men. How could one reconcile Thomas Aquinas in his mendicant friar's habit with this statement? In modern times, yes, the cultivation (I should prefer to say the enjoyment) of these things has been extensively carried on by a class living on the fruits of other men's labour, but it was not so in that great popular and corporate life of old Christendom. The highest intellectual cultivation in those times was reached by men sworn to poverty and committed to the cause of the poor. And this still goes on, even though it may elude the notice of not a few.

Taking another example of the same thing, Mr. Krutch says that Europe must rid itself of imperialism, military pride, and the national spirit, if it is "to continue at all", although without these, he insists, we could not have had "the glory that was Greece, the grandeur that was Rome, or the right little, tight little island which is still called England". These are things, says Mr. Krutch, that "we hate", and yet without them we could not have had Shakespeare or Racine. "This thing called civilization", he writes, "grew up under certain conditions and flourished as a result of them. It was associated with the very tendencies which progressives as well as radicals deplore." But Mr. Krutch thinks very loosely when, by implication, he equates imperialism, military pride, and the national spirit with mere armed conquest, soldierly arrogance, and chauvinistic nationalism; he confuses an abuse or exaggeration of a thing with the thing itself, saying that we must be rid of it; and then he goes on to say that nevertheless these evils produced great goods which it would be very hard to see go also. But is there not a righteous imperialism, conceivable if not historically actual, as distinguished from mere political or economic conquest? Is there not a military pride consisting in the observance of a manly and heroic code of duty, honour, and loyalty, to be distinguished from hard and boastful swashbuckling? Is there not a national spirit that consists in a simple love of one's land and people, to be sharply marked off from an arrogant and contemptuous nationalism? And if these things can exist without their abuses and exaggerations, do we "hate them"? Do we really want to get along without them? Could we indeed get along without them? I do not think so, and I do not even believe that Mr. Krutch really thinks so, for he would find, if he looked closely enough, that it has only been when and in so far as these things have been clean of their abuses that they have produced fruits to enrich European life.

It would be possible to go on very much further striking down point after point in these essays, and in every case the error would be seen to lie rooted in Mr. Krutch's misreading of the essential nature of Europe. For Europe may be likened unto a garden where many beautiful flowers have grown, and whose secret life is in its mystic soil; Mr. Krutch has seen and admired these flowers, but he has not traced their stems and roots down through the now tangled underbrush of weeds. The flowers are fading because the weeds are choking off their life, and some men say we must pull them up and transplant them in other soil where they may grow again. But Mr. Krutch is afraid they will not grow in another soil, and he is right, even though he does not know why he is right. And that is the reason why it has not occurred to him that there is but one way to restore the beauty of the garden, and that is to pull up the weeds.

Grant and Lee

HOFFMAN NICKERSON

IN THIS second decade after the Armistice of 1918, among the military studies so constantly appearing, it is interesting to find a goodly number concerned with the American Civil War. The most notable of these which the present writer has yet seen is Fuller's *Grant and Lee.**

Major-General J. F. C. Fuller, the fertile writer whom the British Army nicknames "Boney" to liken his intelligence to the Corsican's, was the wartime Chief of Staff to the British Tank Corps in France, later served as personal assistant to Sir Hugh Milne when the latter was Chief of the Imperial General Staff. Notwithstanding the extremes to which he has pushed certain theories, he is the chief living British philosopher and analyst of war.

The subtitle of the present book is "A Study in Personality and Generalship", and after an introductory section – intended chiefly for the British reader but containing few errors to rebuff Americans – on the North and South, their clash, and their respective armies, the author concerns himself solely with his two commanders.

In his *Generalship of U. S. Grant* published some years ago, Fuller ranged himself with the increasing number of those, like Major C. F. Atkinson in England and Colonels Wiley Howell and A. L. Conger in America, who consider Grant underrated. In this book he goes further and, while admiring Lee's character to the full, rates the Southerner's generalship below that of his chief opponent. For him the North won not only because it had greater resources but also because Grant saw the conflict as a whole, was constantly learning, and possessed a compelling personality admirably adapted to his rôle; whereas Lee the soldier-saint was locally Virginian in outlook, showed the same brilliancy and the same shortcomings from beginning to end, could inspire his army but could not or would not control his chief subordinates, and failed to guide the Confederate government as the occasion demanded.

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* GRANT AND LEE *by Major-General J. F. C. Fuller* (SCRIBNER'S. 323 pp. $3.00.)

This thesis flatly opposes what was long the main current of British military thought; indeed in his preface Fuller calls Henderson's *Stonewall Jackson*, long the bible of the British Staff College, "almost as romantic as Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*". Again, discussing Jackson's delay on June 30, 1862, during the Seven Days Battles, he says: "Henderson's account of Jackson's delay is so misleading as to be almost fictitious."

For Fuller as for Conger, Grant succeeded through his strong common sense: when he saw a problem he did not spend his time in wondering what Napoleon would have done but considered the situation on its merits. Conger also has noted Grant's formidable combination of humility and capacity to learn, together with self-control and complete self-reliance. He came honestly by the humility, for after the Mexican War drink had forced him to leave the Army and thereafter he had sunk to an obscure ne'er-do-well – as an ex-drunkard, his self-mastery under pressure is the more astonishing. At all events, the self-control and self-reliance, at their strongest when difficulties were worst, were inborn. Fuller quotes Colonel Lyman: "Grant's face has three expressions: deep thought; extreme determination; and great simplicity and calmness" – which is not entirely unlike Henry Adams's less complimentary reference in the *Education*: "Grant was a primitive man who should have lived in a cave and worn skins." And yet this almost illiterate man went for three years from victory to victory, at Donelson and Shiloh dragging success back from the precipice-edge of defeat, manoeuvring in the Vicksburg campaign with a boldness which frightened even his best subordinate Sherman, while in other theatres of war Federal generals as well furnished with men and equipment as himself were constantly defeated. Appointed to command the armies of the United States in '64, within a month he had sent Sherman his famous map of his entire theatre of war, drawing from the latter the comment: "From that map I see all, and glad am I that there are now minds at Washington able to devise. . . . That we are now all to act in a common plan on a common centre, looks like enlightened war."

Grant's imperturbable courage, like Lee's for that matter, is well known, but to unheroic souls like most of us it is pleasant to dwell upon. Equally striking is Grant's almost mediaeval indifference to physical pain: he who – temporarily but painfully crippled – could none the less hobble off his ship at Shiloh and inspire the rally which reversed the course of the action, who could ride over rough mountain trails to Chattanooga in agony from a recent fall from his horse, and on arrival could calmly and at once begin re-establishing the desperate situation, was no ordinary man.

Still another point is worth noting: in Mexico Grant had served as regimental quartermaster, an experience which vividly showed him the complete dependence of strategy upon supplies.

Turning now to Fuller's account of Lee, the latter's heroism and magnetic virtue are praised as they deserve. Nevertheless a strong case is made out against over-praise of the great Virginian as bold in manoeuvre and ready to court personal danger but nevertheless limited in strategic grasp and unable or unwilling to impose his authority. Where Grant's personal modesty helped rather than hindered both thought and action, Lee's excessive humility, his undue tact, amiability, and self-suppression, needlessly lost point after point. He ruined his first campaign, in West Virginia in '61, by trying to soothe a petty squabble between subordinate commanders instead of straightening out matters by proper use of his legal power to command. Throughout the war we find him treating all Southern soldiers, worse still all Southern generals, as crusaders in a holy cause, whose faults are to be gently reasoned with, sometimes indirectly rebuked, but never sharply censured and still less punished. "That his example did influence his army is beyond doubt – it sanctified it and him; yet its discipline remained beneath contempt, towards it he acted like a soft-hearted father; he was its exalted leader, its high priest . . . not its general. 'Colonel', he said to an officer who begged for a visit, 'a dirty camp gives me nausea. If you say your camps are clean I will go'." Thrice happy the Commander-in-Chief whose subordinates beg for visits. But unhappy the army whose leader does not find out which subordinate officers have dirty camps and then give those subordinates fits.

In planning campaigns and battles, all the world knows Lee's skill, and his extreme boldness justified only by his contempt for the Federal commanders in his front. At first this contempt was warranted: McClellan, Pope, Burnside, and Hooker were all his inferiors. But by the summer of 1863 the Army of the Potomac, far from disintegrating under its succession of defeats, was pulling itself together; its staff work was improving, and Meade though no genius was no fool and no coward. Consequently the overconfident decision to attack on the third day at Gettysburg led only to bloody repulse.

Although Lee's insufficient control over his chief subordinates is well known to military students, nevertheless Fuller's summary is impressive. In part at least the lack of authority grew from misapplied religious faith: Lee himself said, "My interference in battle would do more harm than good. I have then to rely on my brigade and division commanders. I think and work with all my power to bring the troops to the right place at the right time; then I have done my duty. As soon as I order them forward into battle, I leave my army in the hands of God," or (as Fuller gravely notes) in the hands of the lesser Southern generals. Given lieutenants like Stonewall Jackson and Jeb Stuart, the method worked; for Jackson, notwithstanding his occasional disastrous delays and his strange fits almost of religious mania, was a magnificent fighter, and Stuart a born leader of light cavalry. But even with Jackson and Stuart, Lee's method had its shortcomings; his orders were too few, too brief, and too vague. With less talented subordinates, of course the results were still worse. An eye witness noted of Lee on the second day of Gettysburg ". . . that during the whole time the firing continued, he only sent one message and only received one report. It is evidently his system to arrange the plan thoroughly with the three corps commanders, and then leave to them the duty of modifying and carrying it out to the best of their abilities." But, comments Fuller, "When things go wrong, how can subordinates modify a plan? They can only muddle it" — as they did at Gettysburg. And yet Lee was no distant Commander-in-Chief, far behind the front and in touch with it only by telegraph like Moltke and his successors; he was a field commander who in open country, on fields like Fredericksburg and Gettysburg, was almost as close to the fighting units as Frederick or Napoleon.

Let us look for a moment at the Peninsula Campaign of 1862: McClellan, a good organizer but an inert and over-cautious field general, had brought an army of about one hundred thousand Federals close up to Richmond and entrenched himself on a front astride of the Chickahominy river with three-quarters of his force south of that stream and only one-quarter north of it. Learning through Stuart that the Federal right flank was "in the air", unentrenched and open to attack, Lee decided to leave only an entrenched screen of troops opposite the Federal left and to concentrate against the exposed Federal right by bringing Jackson suddenly down from fifty miles away to the northwest. Throughout this campaign we find Fuller's case against Lee not only supported but amplified by Stuart's latest biographer, the talented Captain John W. Thomason of the U. S. Marines, experienced in war and a Southerner with a great fund of family tradition and of youthful acquaintance with old Confederates able to supplement the written records. Lee, Thomason tells us, set forth his plan at a conference with his division commanders and Jackson, and then actually left the room so that his subordinates might be freer to discuss details! No wonder his subsequent orders were, as Thomason notes, "a little vague". Jackson's delays are as inexplicable to Thomason as to Fuller; the latter notes that on the critical first day, June 26, when complete surprise was possible, Stonewall advanced only two miles in eleven hours. Even the next day Jackson strangely failed to attack until Lee, for once, saw fit to ride over and intervene. From June 27 Lee completely lost control of the action and made matters worse by depriving himself of his cavalry, sending Stuart off on a raid without adequate objective. On June 29 at White Oak Swamp and Frazer's Farm another opportunity for destroying the Federal army was lost by Jackson's astounding lethargy. Fuller writes "Jackson's behaviour this day was due either to utter exhaustion or to a fit of religious mania"; and Thomason supports him, writing: "Lee, who now comprehended the situation perfectly, had ordered Jackson to hasten across White Oak Swamp and strike the northern flank of the enemy, but Jackson never got into the fight at all — for reasons known to him and to nobody else on earth." Two days later with Stuart still absent and Lee over-confidently thinking the Federals demoralized, the Southern commander attacked McClellan's strong position at Malvern Hill, but so disjointedly that the Northern artillery alone shot the assaulting troops to pieces, the blue infantry hardly being engaged. Indeed throughout the campaign the Confederate attacks were delivered piecemeal and unco-ordinated.

On balance, Lee's audacity, based on his personal knowledge of McClellan, had driven back the latter and saved Richmond. On the other hand the risks had been great, a very little more energy on the opening days would have given McClellan victory, and in the event he had saved his army. Moreover the Confederates had lost twenty thousand and the Federals only fifteen. The Confederate General Richard Taylor, in *Destruction and Reconstruction*, writes:

> Indeed it may be confidently asserted that from Cold Harbor to Malvern Hill inclusive, there was nothing but a series of blunders, one after another, and all huge. The Confederate commanders knew no more about the topography of the country than they did about Central Africa. . . . We had much praying at various headquarters, and large reliance on special providence; but none were vouchsafed, by pillar of cloud or fire; so we blundered on, like people trying to read without knowledge of their letters.

In the Gettysburg campaign of '63 at the beginning of Lee's advance into Maryland he repeated his error of sending away Stuart with the bulk of the Confederate cavalry, and this although a Federal blunder of the same sort had just given him the opportunity of winning what was to be his last great victory at Chancellorsville. Lee's orders to Stuart were vague, obscure, and full of "ifs". Thomason comments: "They fall outside, even, of that latitude which a general may with propriety extend to a trusted subordinate." Consequently Lee blundered into the Gettysburg battle of which his own report says: "It was commenced in the absence of correct intelligence . . . and . . . would have been gained could one determined and united blow have been delivered by our whole line." The want of information was due to the detaching of Stuart; the inability to strike a united blow sprang from Lee's inability or unwillingness to co-ordinate the operations.

Still another count of Fuller's against Lee is the latter's constant failure to organize supply. His army was chronically so short of food that his strategy was dominated by the necessity for constant movement; when he had exhausted the local foodstuffs of a given neighbourhood he had to leave it promptly or his men would starve. Colonel Wiley Howell of the U. S. Army has made the same point forcibly and in detail; although Fuller seems not to have read him. Lee himself gave as his chief reason for having to fight at Gettysburg: "The country was unfavourable for collecting supplies while in the presence of the enemy's main body, as he was enabled to restrain our foraging parties. . . . A battle thus became, in a measure, unavoidable." In other words his defective service of supply forced his hand. It is true that the South was poor compared with the North, nevertheless competent witnesses agree that the sufferings of the Army of Northern Virginia were due as much to maladministration as to poverty. General Long in his *Memoirs* *of Robert E. Lee* says: "Everything needful was wanted except arms and ammunition. The abundant supplies with which the country teemed at the beginning of the war, instead of being collected and preserved for future use, were allowed to be dissipated. . . ." And Jefferson Davis himself writes that as late as the spring of '65, while Lee's men were starving, there were stored in and near Richmond four million meat rations, two million five hundred thousand bread rations, and much tea, coffee, and sugar. Lee made no effort to tap these immense stocks; even when Davis himself asked where he would like to have supplies sent he replied that "the military situation makes it impossible to answer". Throughout the war the Confederate Ordnance Department was ably administered by capable men, and, in a community predominantly agricultural, foodstuffs should have been more plentiful than munitions. But although Lee constantly complained of short rations, his letters are content to sob over it, they never thunder, nor did he ever take the matter strongly in hand.

The climax of Fuller's case against the great Virginian is that the latter was unduly local in outlook, considered too much his own state of Virginia instead of seeing the war as a whole, and treated Jefferson Davis and the Confederate government with deference far too great for the good of the Southern cause. Although Lee had the title of Commander-in-Chief for no more than brief periods at the beginning and end of the war, yet while he legally commanded only the Army of Northern Virginia, Davis and the government constantly asked his advice as to the other Confederate armies and the general situation. Yet Lee habitually treated Davis with a deference which as far as the language of his letters went might be called subservient. Late in the game he refused even to give an opinion as to whether Richmond should be evacuated, on the ground that this was a political question; whereas it was really a matter of strategy. And when made virtually dictator in February '65 he did nothing except recommend the enlistment of Negroes. As the war entered its last phase, in '64 Beauregard and even Longstreet saw that nothing could be done without concentrating the available Confederate forces. For a moment Lee himself believed the recovery of Tennessee and Kentucky would be more important than the capture of Washington. But he failed to urge Jefferson Davis to make northern Georgia the principal theatre; indeed he somewhat discouraged Davis's idea of sending him there. Again in February and March '65 he would not press Davis to make terms while the Confederacy still had armies in the field.

Stephens, the Confederate Vice-President, records still another occasion on which Lee seems not to have seen the war as a whole: *i.e.*, his decision of June '63 to invade Maryland. Planning the campaign that was to end at Gettysburg, Lee well understood the importance of encouraging the Northern peace party, and yet he deliberately stirred up Northern spirit by invading first Maryland and then Pennsylvania.

On the other side Grant saw the war whole from the beginning. Placed by chance beside the upper Mississippi in '61, the pre-war ne'er-do-well promptly grasped the importance of that stream. Barring the unlikely chance of a quick and crushing decision in the narrow and defensively strong theatre between the

Alleghanies and the Atlantic, Tennessee and Kentucky constituted the sally-port of the Confederacy, the one zone from which a successful advance would threaten the unity of the Federal states. In 1862 Grant took Forts Henry and Donelson, thereby securing the lower Cumberland and Tennessee river valleys, and then broke the Confederate counter-attack at Shiloh. Next year, in a campaign of rapid and unexpected manoeuvres he took Vicksburg at an expense of less than a quarter of the Confederate losses. In the fall of '63 he finally closed the Confederate sally-port by his victories near Chattanooga in the southern Alleghanies. At Chattanooga he found the army starving, and his first move was to restore the service of supply by opening the lines of communication.

We have seen how in the spring of '64, within a few weeks of Grant's appointment as Federal Commander-in-Chief, the Federal grand strategy had become unified and logical for the first time during the war. Once more Fuller's judgement of Grant and his plan is strikingly confirmed by Thomason:

> A new man, Grant . . . has come out of the West, with the habit of winning, and . . . has studied the matter with his pale cold eyes and his simple, clear-thinking brain behind them. . . . Here are a lot of people who have been fighting back and forth for three years. They are still fighting, but they must be mighty tired, and their stuff is wearing out. We've been fighting, too, and had no luck at this end, but there are more of us than there are of them, and we can outlast them, that way. Now, the thing we've got to do, to whip them, is to go where they are, and fight, and keep on fighting until we've used them up. No use talking about Richmond – about anything else at

all – there's Lee's army, yonder. Break it down, and then you'll have it all in your hand – Richmond and the whole concern. . . . He saw the war, and I think he saw it as simply as that – from the Red River to the Atlantic, from the Potomac to the Gulf. Already he has sheared away much of the Confederacy, opened the Mississippi, cleared the border states in the West. *He plans for the whole war – not for any battle, or any one campaign.* He has Sherman in his right hand and Meade in his left. Then there are little generals: Thomas, Sigel, Butler. And the blockade.

In Grant and Lee's first battle against each other in the Wilderness, intimate Confederate knowledge of the difficult, enclosed country made the action indecisive. Probably (for Lee's losses are not certainly known) Grant with his larger army lost a little more than twice as many as his opponent. But the Federals could afford these losses better than the Confederates, and strategically the action benefited the former, for Grant continued to move forward. Using the historical present, Thomason observes: "This enemy is not going to retreat."

In these actions of '64 Lee's skill in defensive dispositions enabled him to save his army. Bad blunders by Grant's subordinates, Sigel, Butler, and Smith who could have taken Petersburg out of hand from a Confederate garrison of about a ninth of his own strength, repeatedly robbed the Union Commander-in-Chief of success. Even so, Lee was held; the steady pounding left him no opportunity for manoeuvre, and meanwhile Sheridan was clearing the Valley of Virginia and Sherman was marching through Georgia. Moreover the balance of casualties was by no means always in Lee's favour; at the "Bloody Angle" at Spottsylvania, in spite of his skilful dispositions, he lost more heavily than Grant. About this time Grant anticipated Foch's famous remark about the last quarter of an hour: "There comes a time in every hard-fought battle, when both armies are nearly or quite exhausted, and it seems impossible for either to do more; this is the turning-point; whichever after first renews the fight, is sure to win." And come what may, Grant saw to it that he himself was always the first to renew. The Appomattox campaign of '65 was a skilful piece of mopping up; covered by Grant's steady pounding at Lee, the fall of Wilmington and Sherman's advance from Georgia through the Carolinas had broken the back of the Confederacy.

To the old charge that Grant, although an able strategist, was unskilful in battle tactics, a mere stupid and brutal hammerer, Fuller answers partly with a plea in avoidance. Yes, he admits, Grant was not a great tactician, and neither was any other general of the time because tactical thought was still that of the smooth-bore musket days of Marlborough, Frederick, and Napoleon; that it was based on the idea of assault with the bayonet; whereas the introduction of the rifle had reduced the chances of successful assault nearly to zero. Indeed this point is ill understood even today; in spite of the costly experience of 1914-18 and the steadily rising proportion of machine guns in every army since, everywhere we still see unarmoured infantry practising the assault. And this although the rational assaulting weapons of today are no longer the rifle and bayonet but the gun and especially the caterpillar-mounted, highly mobile, and armoured gun, *i.e.*, the tank. For Grant and Lee there was more excuse; in their youth the Mexican war of '48 had been fought by infantry carrying smooth-bore muskets much like those of Marlborough's time. At any rate Lee was as much at fault as Grant: his assaults at Malvern Hill and Gettysburg failed like Grant's at Vicksburg and Cold Harbor and were at least equally costly. Moreover in '62 and '63 the average of battle casualties throughout Grant's unbroken succession of victories was only ten per cent, whereas in Lee's battles of the same years – including the two defeats of Antietam and Gettysburg – it was over sixteen per cent. In '64 and '65 the administration and staff work of Lee's army were no longer capable of recording losses accurately, while Grant's losses were about what they had been in his earlier fights.

Fuller's case for Grant and against Lee – that is against his generalship, for no one could praise the Virginian more highly as an inspiring and heroic figure – is strong and must be reckoned with by subsequent scholars. We have seen how fully Thomason corroborates him. But Fuller himself would be the last to claim to have closed the question; indeed his modesty is almost excessive, refreshingly so in this day of brass and ballyhoo. If it be a mark of intellectual fertility to suggest ideas from which others might beget further books on related subjects, then the English philosopher of war assuredly meets this test, for his pages strongly suggest at least two books yet to be written. Of these one would be a study of Lee and Grant's relations with their governments. How far should a Commander-in-Chief venture into the vast and tangled no-man's-land between pure politics and pure strategy? A point which Fuller does not make is the strong tradition of political passivity of the U. S. Officers' Corps. Here we have both great Civil War leaders formed in this tradition. Grant is always making good use of his resources and personal credit, constantly suggesting to higher authority when he must, acting calmly and vigorously on his own authority whenever he can. On the face of the record he seems to come off better than Lee. But there seems room for further study of the latter's influence upon the Confederate military policy.

Again, Fuller's book suggests a study of Lee as an insurrectionary general, especially as compared with Washington, a book which should discuss not only Marse Robert's attitude toward his government but also toward his subordinate commanders, his soldiers, and the Southern cause in general. The Englishman notes Lee's marriage to Washington's step-granddaughter and his admiration for the first President, but since the author has other fish to fry he does not develop the theme. Henry Adams's novel *Democracy*, written from a wealth of personal knowledge, makes a Virginian and former Confederate soldier say of Lee: "We thought he was to be our Washington . . . ; and perhaps he had some such idea himself." But although Washington was deferential and scrupulously correct toward Congress, he worshipped legality less than Lee, and realized better than the Confederate the unimportance of personal feelings compared with tangible results for the Cause.

That Grant saw the grand strategy of the war in terms of communications and economic areas is proved up to the hilt; each of his blows landed full upon the most important point in the Confederacy which was for the moment within his reach. And perhaps Lee was too much impressed with the importance of the city of Washington and insufficiently mindful of the Confederate "sally-port" between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi. On the other hand, the present writer suspects that further study of the economics of the Confederacy might persuade Fuller to rate Richmond and Virginia higher in the Confederate strategic scheme. The South was primarily agricultural, consequently her slender industrial resources were peculiarly precious to her. The industrial development of the Birmingham, Alabama, region was not yet begun; the chief steel mill on Confederate soil, the source both of cannon and of railroad rolling stock, was the Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond. Also, although unable for the moment to verify the reference, the present writer often heard the late R. M. Johnston say that the only lead mine in the South was in Virginia.

Finally, the most whole-hearted admirer of Lee will find in Fuller no lack of appreciation for the Virginian's real abilities or of reverence for his towering virtues. "That Grant and Lee did possess . . . genius in totally different forms is beyond question, and . . . neither was aware of it, . . . hence its mysterious driving force. . . . One thing is . . . certain, few generals in history and none so submissive as Lee, have been able to animate an army as his self-sacrificing idealism animated the Army of Northern Virginia. To find a comparison we must go back to the days of the Saints."

John Taylor and the Political Economy of Agriculture

Part III

ANDREW NELSON LYTLE

TO PUT into effect the new policy of indirection that had been forced upon it, the Aristocracy of Paper and Patronage created a magical phrase, the implied powers of the Constitution, which would, to compress Taylor's comparison, transform a modest republican wife bound by a marriage contract into a gay, painted fancy woman promising all things to those who would keep her in chalk and silk. With logical irony he compared the pretenses of implication to the strict meaning of the compact: *Powers are divided between the Federal and state departments to restrain ambitious men in both* — therefore they may be accumulated in the hands of ambitious men in one. *Confederation is Union* — so is consolidation. *Each state has a right to make its own constitution* — that is, Congress has the right to make state constitutions. *Election is the best security against unconstitutional laws for usurping powers withheld either from the Federal or state governments* — the Supreme Court is better. *A mutual right of self-preservation, both in the state and Federal departments, is the next best* — such a right in one is indispensable, in the other pernicious. *The protection of property is an end of government* — that is, it has the right to take away the property of all men and give it to one or a few. *Taxes are to be* *imposed for national use* — over-rich corporations and exclusive interests are part of a nation; therefore taxes must be raised to enrich them further. *The Federal department cannot constitutionally invade state rights* — it may do so at pleasure. *Congress may establish post roads* — it may make all roads. *It may make war* — that is, it may make canals. *It may dispose of public lands* — it may give them away. *It was instituted for common defense, general welfare, and to preserve the blessings of liberty* — this means, when properly construed, that it was instituted to establish monopolies, exclusive privileges, bounties, sinecures, pensions, lotteries, and to give away the public moneys. *It may not tax exports* — but it may invest a capitalist interest with a power to tax them very highly and very partially for its own benefit by means of commercial restrictions which diminish their exchangeable value and foster a monopoly enhancing the prices of those necessaries which the raisers of these exports may consume. *Finally, it has the power to govern ten square miles* — that is, it may govern all the states internally, with the concurrence of the Supreme Court.

Such were the underground avenues which transferred wealth and liberty from a union of states to a small group of irresponsible self-seekers — the Paper-and-Patronage Aristocrats. The tariffs levied for fostering infant manufactures became the most sinister subterfuges invented by the materialists. They promised independence from Europe; but in fact they threw the major industry, agriculture, upon the mercy of a few hundred men. They set at odds the mechanical and agricultural labourers, without allowing the mechanics to benefit by the revenue raised, all of which was divided among the master-capitalists. And by depressing agriculture they were able to draw off workers from a living that was reasonably sure and independent to throw them into the factory where they were not even assured of subsistence. A continual drain upon agriculture must eventually destroy the mechanic, since he lives by exchanging the products of his labour for the products of farm labour.

> If a combination of a small band of land speculators [wrote Taylor] united in one interest by a small capital, might shake the Union, what may be done by the mighty combination of banking and manufacturing capitalists, stronger in number, in influence, and united by an enormous annual income? And if a policy which must have vanished, when the uncultivated lands were exhausted, was yet an object of apprehension, ought not the same policy, which may last as long as land is cultivated and labour is exerted, to suggest some degree of foresight?

With the opening of the cotton lands and the West generally, the anxiety of the settlers to enrich themselves as quickly as possible played this section into these Eastern hands. The West believed that quick wealth would arrive by a speedy programme of internal improvements, which the East promised in return for support of the tariff. But as the West, certainly the Southwest, became more settled, it gradually came to realize that it had betrayed its lasting interest, agriculture; for the canals, improved roads, and railroads were only more speedy avenues over which its wealth flowed eastward. But the wilderness was so rich that its settlers were slow to observe into what pockets clinked the real profits of internal improvements. By the time of the Southern war for independence the Southwest had definitely allied itself with its true ally, the Southeast; the border states were confused; and the Northwest, although suspicious of the East, was tricked into a war waged to reduce its people to servitude.

The laws of nature make, according to Taylor, the most lasting unions. They are based upon geography, climate, traditional inheritance, the weather, desires, passions, interests, and numerous unknown and unknowable causes. It is upon these unpredictable phenomena that international trade is based, a trade whose laws are as mysterious as nature itself and which will eventually break down all artificial interference as well as destroy those agents who have introduced this interference in political spheres. Man may for a time violate the laws of nature, but he does so at his peril.

The symbol for commercial exchanges, the point of contact between all such unions, is free trade, the non-interference with the ebb and flow of the world's goods. In a country primarily agricultural there are three mediums responsible for its well-being: first, agriculture, the producer of certain crops which the world needs and which it can produce more economically than other countries; next, commerce, which will carry its goods in exchange for those things it desires and which it is unable to produce or must produce at great expense; thirdly, there is the merchant, the intermediary between commerce and agriculture. Supplementing these mediums, there is local manufacture (household and plantation) which is able, through the crafts of spinning and weaving, to make crude garments that will serve a basic need and act as a threat to the highly organized manufacturing nations. This is the only true independence for a nation; it is also the only realistic basis for wealth, since wealth is the enjoyment of the abundance of the earth's goods, and the more Europe imports American farm-stuffs the more of her manufactured goods must be returned in exchange; and if the manufacturing nations attempt to demand too much (an agreement between them is purely theoretical) for their wares, the agricultural nation need have no fear. It holds the strategic position from which it cannot be driven. It is the manufacturing nation grown up at the expense of its agriculture that has manoeuvred itself into a perpetual state of expediency. England is the perfect example. Its countryside has been ruined; its farmers have been driven into the cities to serve the Paper-and-Patronage Aristocracy. All of its labour goes to increase the power of this interest, an interest dependent upon the British navy, for without the navy its goods could not be impressed upon its colonies and the more primitive societies of the distant continents. The American Revolution was fought to escape from this sort of bondage, and now a deluded political philosophy is trying to fasten upon the new Union the very masters it fought to escape from. Is a tyrant more pleasing in republican clothing, Taylor asks? "Had they [the revolutionary fathers] been told that they were fighting to destroy the militia and to make agriculture food for charter and paper capital they would have discerned no reason for making themselves food for powder."

Taylor answers the loose constructionists with definition, a thing that Jefferson and his followers should have done the moment they took oath and power.

Then a definition might have cut like a broad-axe; when Taylor agitated, the blade was flicked and dull. Nevertheless, he turned the stone – Congress is a precise word used to designate a congregation of deputies from independent states. If the phrase "Congress of the United States" had conveyed implied powers, it would have been useless to grant special legislative powers. Congress, through representatives, cannot exceed their delegated powers. It is upon this principle that the Congress cannot alter the terms of the Union. The word "federal" means a league between sovereign nations. The word "state" means a political community. Therefore the consolidating school takes refuge under the word "people", that word which, without limiting terms, may mean anything. If a minority of counties in a state dissent from a constitution, it is obligatory on all, because no county comprises a people politically independent. But the Constitution of the United States was only obligatory on those ratifying states because each state comprised a sovereign people; and no people existed invested with a sovereignty over the thirteen states. This brings Taylor to his conclusion: if the art of construction shall include the power of dispensing with the meaning of words and also with the most conclusive current of facts by which these words have been interpreted, it will be able, like the dispensing power of kings, to subvert any principles, however necessary to secure human happiness, and to break every ligament for tying down power to its good behaviour.

The art of construction nullifies the full connotation of representation: legislation for internal affairs must be made locally; legislators will live under the laws they make, and for this reason their legislation will conform to the true interests of the community. There was one strong safeguard against the abuse of this principle of government; it was the traditional safeguard which had for so many centuries preserved the meaning of liberty to Englishmen and which Englishmen had brought with them to the new world and which their progeny were to neglect: the militia. This militia had somehow brought the rebellion against the mother country to a successful end; it would be well used against the Indian and at New Orleans under Jackson; but its neglect in favour of a national army finally rendered representation a farce. If South Carolina had maintained its militia in a state of efficiency, that state's representatives might not have backed down before this same Jackson who had ridden to power on its back. In the last extremity a people which pretends to govern itself must base its pretensions upon a self-discipline, for only that can make a militia efficient. One wonders if Taylor was familiar with John Dryden's Civic Guards of Rhodes:

The country rings around with loud alarms,
And raw in fields the rude militia swarms;
Mouth without hands; maintained at vast expense,
In peace a charge, in war a weak defense;
Stout once a month they march, a blust'ring band,
And ever, but in times of need, at hand:
This was the morn, when issuing on the guard,
Drawn up in rank and file they stood prepared
Of seeming arms to make a short essay,
Then hasten to be drunk, the order of the day.

These lines might have been written about any county muster in the Union. It was such a condition that caused Taylor to be concerned for constitutional government, but not to despair. He believed that errors might be remedied; that principles had not wandered too far astray but that they might be returned to the pens and folds of checks and balances. And who will say that the first quarter of the nineteenth century was too late?

His argument, heavy with the passion only logic can confine, did make its impression in Virginia. There his books were read as chapters of a political bible. But outside of the state they were little known; and only later would they influence more widely, through indirect channels, those politicians who had inherited the failure of the Virginia Dynasty. His prophetic warnings sounded in the sweaty halls of democracy like the cries of Priam's oldest daughter; and like Priam's daughter when Troy fell down, agriculture was carried into the enemy's house as a slave. The excessive taxation – direct and, above all, indirect – of agriculture left its farmers and planters little or no capital to maintain the fertility of wasting fields or keep up the necessary repairs of farming establishments. This condition has forced landed people to live off the top-soil without allowing them to restore to their ground its vanishing fertility. Consequently the farmer has been brought to the condition a banker would find intolerable, that of living off capital without replenishing it by usury. And so the farmer since the Revolution has been driven to hunt new grounds; exhaust them; take up others. Each westward move (Go west, young man, go west; be a slave, young man, be a slave!) has made his debasement more complete, while the paper financiers have been enriched beyond sensible comprehension. They have held in their hands the symbols of the accumulation of a hundred years' exploitation out of a rich continent. Instead of using it as other conquerors have done, to establish their authority upon a secure basis, or expending it in great shows of pomp and luxurious revels, curious sins and evil practices, their atrophied imaginations confined them to a repetition of their practices in foreign fields. But Europe had played the game much longer, and that branch of the paper aristocracy filched in a decade the loot of a century and a half. The mathematical abstractions of this school of finance inevitably drove them to dupe themselves. They had ignored natural laws, which leads to confusion and madness. When, oblivious to reality, with hardened sensibilities, they turned to replenish the gambling purse, they found exhausted fields, exhausted moral character, hungry mobs, and banks stacked full of paper. The real wealth gone, this paper is seen in its true light, in the character given it by old Taylor a hundred-and-twenty-five years ago: a medium for transferring wealth. Since the wealth has been transferred beyond American political jurisdiction, the paper is useless and will remain idle. There are still isolated pools of riches which this paper, by its spongy nature, may absorb; but the ocean bed, for the most part, is drying sand. It will take a long time to fill up again such an immense reservoir; and it may never be filled until the paper lords, whether as the old unofficial plutocracy or as occupants of the seats of political power, have emptied the Union of its people in wars of senseless fury, hungering after the dope of abstract power to satisfy a mania so strong that only complete ruin may end it. The world is too disillusioned to believe that this interest would await the long process of nature, the long process of rebuilding a leached soil, and the longer one of restoring dignity to shattered morals by putting the citizen in possession of property which has the ancient meaning and the ancient regenerating power.

In such a triumph of the Paper Aristocracy's invisible finance may be read the defeat of Taylor and his school; but the triumph of materialism is not due altogether to its organization, nor to its skill. To understand it we must look to the principles and programmes of the Virginia Dynasty as well; and especially to Taylor, the most consistent and clear-minded among them. There are three stages to his dialectic and to his political action. In all of these there are apparent contradictions which disappear under an analysis that shows the contradictions to be a change of strategy forced upon him by events and by the Virginia Dynasty. First, it has been seen that he opposed Virginia's ratification of the new Constitution, on the grounds that it meant the subversion of his state's independence by a consolidated central government. He is next seen as the defender of the Constitution whose balances would preserve to the states, and hence to Virginia, local self-government and the life he loved, leaving to Washington the management of foreign affairs. The contrariety between his early and middle opinions may be explained on the grounds of making the best of a bad bargain; and since his party had come to power, it was possible for him in good faith to hope that a strict construction might preserve, in the hands of that party, those qualities he deemed necessary to the Union. But when Jefferson, after being elected to overthrow Federalism, made but the feeblest effort to reduce the judiciary, behind which the Federalists retired as into a stronghold, Taylor allied himself to the Quids. When the Quids failed to bring the party back to principles, there was nothing left to do but, along with the others, to follow Jefferson. Half a loaf, Taylor must have argued, was better than a handful of mouldy wheat. From this time on he worked behind the scenes for Monroe, the man he expected to fulfil the principles of the Revolution, while publicly he turned out books full of argument. His last stage was that of pessimistic defiance with a threat of secession. The Missouri Compromise brought forth this alarm, as he saw the goods he had laboured for caught in a current leading directly to war. He contemptuously dismissed the slavery argument as a ruse which his old opponents were using to throw the sections for their own private ends into hostile attitudes. This party reliance on a balance of power between the sections, he announced, was nothing more than an abandonment of the Constitution and the reliance on a struggle for power which had always been and was still a tacit conflict and a prelude to real war:

> I see a nation dissected into pecuniary and political corporations; legislation dabbling in the frauds it fosters, and sharing in the spoils it bestows; representation converted into personal motives, incapable of detection; legislatures sinking into exchequer spendthrifts; hordes of speculators gambling with legislative judicial patronage; for private and public property the recommendations of frugality as indispensable to the continuance of our free

form of government, so often recommended, and so steadily practised by two of the wisest and most virtuous patriots [Washington and Jefferson] derided; in short, I see a picture bespangled with noxious meteors, gliding before our eyes and the admired system of government, under which we have enjoyed so much happiness.

How bitterly he must have regarded the drying ink which recorded these words in his old age, for these words admitted his failure. It has been left to this generation to discover the reasons for this defeat, a defeat which his successors have had to bear. If it were necessary to say what America needed at the end of the war with England, it should be said that America needed leaders of a counter-revolution. The revolt against tradition had been going on in England for a long time; and whereas the Americans revolted against the revolters against tradition in attempting to redress the plight to which these revolters had brought them, like the leeches of the time they let blood instead of taking off the sucker. The difference between the Federalists and the Republicans was superficial; they both were concerned with the income of industry. The Federalists believed that the talented, the strong, but above all the shrewd should receive the greatest part, making all others render up a part of their goods to this class of individuals whom Taylor named the Paper-and-Patronage Aristocracy. The Republicans, under Jefferson, believed that, with most of the population living on the land, men should be left as much of their earnings as possible. What they did with these earnings, or rather what they did with the property on which these earnings were made, seemed not to concern them; and yet this was the crux of the situation. In this way the English revolution was to be repeated on American soil, the Republicans with their agrarian doctrines representing the earlier, therefore the more stable stage of revolution against mediaevalism, the Paper-and-Patronage school the urbanized and more chaotic stage. Because the Republicans represented this earlier stage of revolt, it contained much more that was traditional, formal, and stable. But Jefferson and Taylor went much farther than the Whig nobles who began by conniving with the Tudors for the Church lands – with the result that their sons and grandsons were able to wrest the power of kingship from the Stuarts. Jefferson wrote some mighty pretty words: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and in their name he destroyed the Church and primogeniture, the high tower and strong rock of traditional society. The concern of the leaders of America's revolution should have been, what kind of life? what basis for liberty? – and then there would have been no further need for a pursuit of happiness.

Traditional elements existed in both parties. It must not be forgotten that Washington and General Lee's father, great landowners both, were Federalists. It might be argued that the beginning of the conflict had the following setup: the Republicans, traditionally speaking, were composed of the yeomen, the intimates of the soil; the Federalists, of the rich landowners whose duty it is to protect the soil and keep it in good state, culturally and politically. Therefore each party contained a large body of opinion which was strictly conservative. But each had disintegrating alloys; the Republicans with the propertyless democracy of the cities, the tools of a plutocracy, as allies; the Federalists, the new capitalist financier whose concept of property had less in common with the land-owning branch of the party than these land-owners had with men like Taylor, Randolph, and Jefferson. The great landowners, furthermore, were to let their conservative sense of the land's meaning be confused by the financier's; and the Republican conservative let his principles be compromised by liberal abstractions.

These impure principles forced John Taylor, a large planter and owner of slaves, a thorough aristocrat in tastes and discipline, into calling himself the economic familiar of the artisan and clerk of the city. It deluded him into his support of the attack on primogeniture, which would make it impossible for his descendants to continue his way of life, just as the separation of state and church would render them agnostics, humanitarians, or brothers in the Y. M. C. A. The appearance of Andrew Jackson, the land speculator, as the leader of this rootless democracy both of country and city, clarified the issue in the next quarter of the century. He came forward as the defender of the plain man, the little man everywhere in the Union; but his defence was that the little man might have an opportunity to grow rich, to exploit the riches of the wilderness as well as the Eastern financier. Although in the South and West there was a social democracy behind him, he must bear his share of blame for reducing this democracy to the state of landless tenants and helpless workers in mill and office.

It was at this time that true conservatism manifested itself in the Carolina school of statesmen. Hammond, Harper, Dew, Fitzhugh, Rhett, and Calhoun denied the early liberalism and attempted to bring about a union of all conservative elements towards the establishment of a complete society. They failed, partly because they rested their defence, in crises, upon the sovereignty of states. Affairs had so clarified themselves by the 1830's that the true strategy was in the regional concept. Using the analogy of military tactics, they loosed the offensive by brigades instead of by corps. Even after secession, as Dr. Frank Owsley's *States Rights and the Confederacy* so clearly shows, the antiquated states' rights destroyed the very things its apologists sought to set up.

At a crucial moment the over-developed political instincts of Taylor and other leaders misled them into believing and acting upon the belief that the Constitution, a political contract, could take the place of all those traditional institutions which make for an abundant and complete life; and when the next generations tried to correct this eccentricity, their failure was already foretold. The doctrine of union spread; then broke under the strain of the religious, patriotic, and conflicting cultural functions with which it was loaded and which it could never, because of its limited form, assimilate or carry. But while this belief lasted, it gave some form to a common life. It localized the trouble and made it possible to be dealt with. Now the disease of a "higher law" is scattered through the whole body politic, and the protection of what is good and permanent in American life is left to the disconnected efforts of noble individuals of humanistic education on the right hand and the left-handed action of humanitarianism, of which the latest example is "planning", raised to some dignity by its inclusion in the heterodox policies of the present Administration.

The degeneration has proceeded apace. Taylor, a farmer, did not weaken his position by limiting his defence to agriculture. He defended those principles necessary for the happiness of the whole state, for only in such a state could agriculture prosper. If in the end this defence failed, it was because it did not try to re-establish those different estates and permanent institutions which make for a spiritual unity. It is such guards and only such that tradition must set up against natural chaos always a-pounding upon the doors of society.

REVIEWS

Signs of Promise*

IN THE night which envelops what used to think of itself as the civilized world, the night of doubt and despair, of cracking systems and collapsing dynasties, the night when moral and social sanctions exist only for individuals and for parochial or provincial groups — in this night to whose blackness and flickering lights our eyes disdain to become accustomed, we call out persistently to the watchmen on our walls for their "signs of promise". In the prosperous sunlight, we pay these guards and prophets little heed: busy about our trifling, absorbing crafts, we account our star-gazers a luxury vain as contemplative monks. The World War, the Treaty of Versailles, the Russian Revolution, Fascism in Italy and Germany, the Depression, the New Deal: here are comets and falling stars which have called, "Sleepers, wake", to the most lethargic observers.

In this awakening lies our brightest hope. A few Ruskins and William Morrises discerned that the higher values which differentiate life from existence — notably, art and religion — could not attain their full stature in a world or an era dominated by industrialism. But for the most part, from the Industrial Revolution till a few years past, men of letters and learning have said in effect: business is the capitalist's affair; government, the statesman's — or, as, alas, since the Civil War we Americans have said, the politician's. The artist betook himself to his ivory tower; the professor to his library and research; the philosopher to his epistemology.

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* A PRIMER FOR TOMORROW *by Christian Gauss* (SCRIBNER'S. 308 pp. $2.50).

The change which has recently occurred has been rapid and prodigious. Deficient as we may find Mr. Roosevelt in a coherent politico-economic philosophy, and rashly lighthearted as some of his experiments have been, we must acknowledge the real debt we owe him and his "New Deal" in stimulating and accelerating, among Americans of all classes, a serious interest in national and international policies. In the universities, "politics" is no longer a topic for conversation only amongst the members of the Liberal Club but is discussed by students of that class which earlier limited itself to baseball scores and radio headliners. And the contrast in professorial attitudes is even more marked. The university teacher who is a full-sized man has never, save ruefully, acquiesced in a system which doomed him to parroting, in the classroom, principles of life and policies of action which he could never have the opportunity to practise; he has never willingly succumbed to being a policeman or a nurse-maid, useful at best as keeping the young out of their parents' way for four years. And if he has often been a pedant or a weaver of abstractions, it has all too frequently been because society has never allowed him to be anything else. Allow him to believe that his brains are held in trust for the use of society, and you will give him a new dignity and a new vigour to be put at the service of society.

Amongst the so-called intellectuals — that is to say, the professional readers and writers without the academic pale, the change has been equally marked. Surrealism has surrendered to Sovietism as the fashionable theme for exposition. Joyce has been replaced by Marx. Edmund Wilson has emerged from Axel's Castle to head for the Finland Station. Mr. Eliot, whose youthful sensibilities were nurtured by the study of Baudelaire, Laforgue, and Corbière, preludes his latest article with the pronouncement: "At the present time I am not very much interested in the only subject which I am supposed to be qualified to write about: that is, one kind of literary criticism. . . . I am largely interested in subjects which I do not yet know very much about: theology, politics, economics, and education." The careers, from inception to extinction, of such quarterlies for the "quality" as the *Hound and Horn* and the *Symposium* have the same story to tell; and the *Bookman* has undergone a sea-change in its metamorphosis into THE AMERICAN REVIEW.

It would be easy to satirize this general exodus from the tower and the library to the arena, for it runs counter to that deep-set faith in salvation by specialization which, beginning with the factory system and the physical sciences, with their more and more minute particularization of skills, spread to the liberal and humane studies, to literature, history, and philosophy. But we, who have seen the specialists in business, in science, and in government unable to perpetuate or to construct a world in which even the simplest material needs of men can find steady satisfaction, and in which their higher natures are persistently stunted — we think it high time that we and all *homines bonae voluntatis* attend the nation's "town meeting", ask questions of our selectmen, speak our minds, and propound our own motions.

Of course talk about Fascism and Communism, social credit, agrarianism, and distributism may be as superficial and merely modish as was much of the chatter in New York, some seasons ago, anent Humanism. But even intellectual fashions have their significance; and for the many who chat glibly, there are the relatively few — not numerically so insignificant — who ponder. And there is no doubt that the Humanist controversy and the Marxist have alike induced, on the part of well-nigh every literary man and artist, a more philosophic attitude toward his vocation. Life does not admit of permanent compartmentalism. All values ultimately must find their place in a coherent axiology. Much as Mr. Babbitt and Mr. More have been derided in the past for their refusal to judge sensibility the only apparatus necessary to literary criticism, much as they have been reviled for their assumption that the aesthetic is not the sole or the final criterion, they have at length been vindicated by the *New Republic* and the Angoffian *American Mercury*. "When studied with any degree of thoroughness", said Babbitt, "the economic problem will be found to run into the political problem, the political problem in turn into the philosophical problem, and the philosophical problem itself to be almost indissolubly bound up at last with the religious problem." The "problem" of art, as Babbitt knew, ran a similar gamut. Whether I am a humanist or an aesthete, a Marxist or a Catholic, I must ultimately, if I am honest and integrated, assign the highest rank to those master-pieces which present, with technical virtuosity, the attitude toward life which I find true.

Admirable illustration of the points made in this homily is furnished by *A Primer for Tomorrow.* Christian Gauss, Dean of Princeton, has devoted his professional career to the teaching of French literature, and an able and stimulating interpreter he has been. But not till this volume has he taken his stand as a watchman upon the walls, surveying civilization within and the barbarians without — or, to speak more exactly, diagnosing the disintegration within, baring the foes who are of our household. He has written an informed and thoughtful book, deficient neither in historical knowledge nor in incisiveness of interpretation, a straightforward, honest book devoid of bigotry or timorousness and without hysterical affectation of convictions not yet vouchsafed him. He is no false prophet; and when vision fails him, he remains silent. The conclusion of his book, he warns, many readers will find disappointing; for, possessing no belief in determinism and no power infallibly to foresee what choice humanity will make between the possible options, he can merely analyze the present that we, who follow his analysis, may choose intelligently the way of life which we and our house will elect to further. "We can assess our past and there are tests which can help us to decide whether certain forms of activity are failing to satisfy the deeper cravings of the human spirit. But our future does not depend upon calculable forces but upon the quality of imagination we possess and the amount of effort we are willing to expend." *A Primer for Tomorrow* is, therefore, not a prediction but a survey: a study of the modern mind. Proper preparation for the future consists of mastering the experience of the past with a view to bring it to bear upon the problems of today, comprehending the mind of our day that we may find or devise a pattern for the future capable of enlisting our intelligent and imaginative support.

The virtue of Dean Gauss's book is not novelty — if there be any virtue in that — but sanity. On "The Disappearance of Sanctions", "The Decline of Religion", "The Disintegration of Capitalism", and "The Threat of Science", he says nothing which would not command general assent amongst thoughtful persons; but I can recall no book which surveys these terrains with more candour and more responsibility. Without any of the tricks manipulated by the journalist, Gauss is a lucid and attractive expositor; and his book may be commended to all who wish an unpartisan and mature guide to the "modern mind" and its imminent problems.

Dean Gauss despairs of "dispersive" liberalism, and sees clearly the weakness of democracy, upon which he quotes the able analysis of Berdyaev. But, neither a materialist nor a determinist, he cannot accept Sovietism. To "social justice" and to economic equality, he has no invincible objection. He clings obdurately, however, to one article of the Liberal creed: men must be free to think and speak and publish; the state must *impose* no orthodoxy. The Soviets, for him, have invented a "new slavery, worse than any the world has ever known, the slavery of the spirit". Yet Fascism, of which the Dean speaks more gently, is equally the master of censorship.

It is just here that the Dean meets his dilemma, though, for so clear-sighted a man, he seems strangely unconscious of it. The central thesis of the Dean's book makes religion the *unum necessarium* for the survival of the Euro-American world. Men must be united by ties more vital than economic necessity. Civilization lives ultimately not by tools but by creeds. "We know", says Burke, "that religion is the basis of civil society and the source of all good and all comfort." To endure, civilization must be creative; and it is so only when it is inspired and maintained by a continuing purpose, a humane faith. The Roman Empire collapsed, Gauss points out, not because the Vandals were so numerous or so potent but because the Empire lacked a common and sustaining faith; and if our civilization disappears, as it has, admittedly, disintegrated, it will be because we have lost a *centre*.

But where is such a centre to be found? Here the Dean cannot help us, for he has found no "religion", even in the reduced form of "social myth", capable of enlisting his whole-minded and whole-hearted support. And he really desires incompatibles — a compelling faith, and toleration of all opinions. He wants liberty *and* authority. Ross Hoffman, in his article in the October Review, sees the dilemma, candidly analyzes it, and boldly asserts that the time has come when the dispersive tendencies of democracy must be checked by the authority of the state, nationally representing Christian civilization. He envisages a "humanistic and ethical state, sworn to alliance with good morals and civilized religion, having much more in common with the early mediaeval monarchies and the Holy Roman Empire than with the modern, laicized, bureaucratic state". Can such a "social myth" command Americans, divided as they are into many varieties of religion and irreligion, sectional in their cultures, diversely backgrounded? The prospect for an authoritarian state deriving its power not from the personality of a dynamic leader or the supremacy of a class but from a common religious and ethical faith, a common philosophy of values, seems more remote and more hopeless with us than with any other nation. Yet Dean Gauss and Professor Hoffman and, I believe, most thoughtful Americans agree in their conviction that votes and tools cannot sustain civilization. What, then, is the prospect before us?

One shaft of hope, I repeat, has perforated our night. The sleepers have awakened; the watchmen have ascended the walls.

AUSTIN WARREN

Cross-Purposes*

ABOUT two-thirds of Mr. Lewisohn's book is a defence of the position for which THE AMERICAN REVIEW fights. The remaining third is a defence of the enemy's position. The result is confusing; but it leaves the reviewer with the hope that Mr. Lewisohn may one day bring all his forces into the same camp, in which case he will be a useful friend.

Mr. Lewisohn is the ally of THE AMERICAN REVIEW in passages such as the following:

> Lacking all sound and severe cultural training, the modern individual never learned that the good life with its striving after perfection and its inevitable resignation, its

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* THE PERMANENT HORIZON *by Ludwig Lewisohn* (HARPER'S. 223 pp. $2.50.)

ultimate submission to the will of God, had not been wickedly invented by reactionaries, but had been found and refound, proclaimed and reproclaimed, because it was in strict conformity with the nature of man and of his universe as given. . . . He who knows Isaiah and Homer, Milton and Goethe and the philosophers of the race . . . will know that if industrialism and centralization have broken down, the thing to do is to de-industrialize and decentralize. If unemployment is permanent, the thing to do is to bring the unemployed men to some acre of land which they can till if but to ease their hunger and whereon they can beget child and build an altar of stone. But the ignorant economists . . . are helpless or paralyzed at best, and at worst propose more industrialization and more centralization. They propose to eliminate competition, which sounds like a worthy aim. But they propose to do so at the cost of an enforced proletarization not only of the body, but of the mind, which will result in ultimate revolutions against the results of their so-called revolution that will surpass in horror and ferocity all earlier wars and conflicts. For man does not change. He is not dumb. He has spoken. His speech concerning himself consists of religion, art, and thought. . . . The foolish babble about this being a machine age and the neurotic babble about man's character having changed must be made to cease. The recognition of the eternal fact that man is a religious animal and can act only as such is the first step not only toward the individual's inner coherence and inner peace; it is also the first step toward the reconstruction of society, toward the penetration of the material world by the laws of the human spirit.

And when Mr. Lewisohn adds to all this a cogent paragraph on "the spiritual and preservative uses of the institution of private property, limited if necessary and curbed to below the predatory level", it seems that we can welcome him as a conservative and a distributist.

It is a surprise, therefore, to find Mr. Lewisohn proclaiming himself a liberal, an individualist, and a last-ditch defender of bourgeois civilization. The bourgeois, he says, "is the eternal religious property-holding freeman of the ages". And again: "Liberalism and individualism . . . are, in fact, the permanent tendencies and ideal values of the sound minds of all enlightened ages." This should interest the Liberty League.

Unhappily, it is not a merely verbal confusion into which Mr. Lewisohn has fallen, for he makes it clear that the religion he is urging on the world is "especially personal religion and metaphysic individually arrived at". And this is the essence of liberalism, of Protestantism, of individualism, of *laissez-faire*. It is the philosophy which leads, in economics, to unrestricted private enterprise and the destruction of that small-scale freedom-giving private property about which Mr. Lewisohn can write such pleasant praise. The long road of progress leads straight from "personal religion and metaphysic individually arrived at", in the sixteenth century, to that type-product of the nineteenth century, Daniel Drew and his Theological Seminary – "the eternal religious property-holding freeman of the ages".

No reader of *The Permanent Horizon* could feel that Mr. Lewisohn has really any sympathy with the Liberty League, or that he could really be led into saying a good word for Daniel Drew. He simply does not accept what the conservative believes to be the teaching of modern history: that liberalism and individualism are at their worst a mere excuse for predatory private enterprise and predatory business, and at their best a trivial weapon with which to face the forces driving us toward the slave state of communism or the slave state of big business.

If Mr. Lewisohn really wants to save the good life of which he writes, really wants to de-industrialize and decentralize our society, really wants to put people on the land and put an end to "the neurotic babble about man's character having changed", he had better join the distributists and stop trying to win this fight with the help of bourgeois liberals. For the bourgeois liberal, as Mr. Lewisohn boasts, "admits error, searches himself, mans the international society of war resisters". This is broadminded of him; but it is not the type of action with which to coerce Mr. Mellon or Mr. Stalin. And furthermore, the bourgeois liberal, as Mr. Lewisohn does not mention, is a buyer and seller from the heart out. He is always likely to straggle from the battle-field to take an option on a pretty site of land and hold it for a rise.

HERBERT AGAR

The Background of H. G. Wells*

THE title of Mr. Wells's new work, as well as the reputation of the author, would lead one to expect in this large volume something out of the ordinary. Such expectations will not be disappointed. Mr. Wells has filled his seven-hundred-odd pages of text with matter of great diversity both in kind and in interest. Naturally a man who has occupied his conspicuous position in English literary life of the last thirty-five years has had many friendships and experiences which cannot help but prove interesting to anyone concerned with the thought and writers of the period. Scattered through these pages may be found many a reminiscence of G. B. Shaw, Frank Harris, George Gissing, Stephen Crane, Lord Northcliffe, the Webbs, Joseph Conrad, Henry James, Graham Wallas, and a host of others who frequented the intellectual society of late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century London. Wells moved in a Fabian society to begin with; since the early Fabian days, the larger number of his friends have been persons of the same interests. It is perhaps of some significance that only once in the book is Hardy mentioned; Galsworthy receives but two passing allusions, one of them none too flattering.

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* EXPERIMENT IN AUTOBIOGRAPHY *by H. G. Wells* (MACMILLAN. 718 pp. $4.00).

The best of the literary reminiscences are not so much the casual anecdotes, of which there are strikingly few, as the thumb-nail sketches of personalities. That which concerns the career of Alfred Harmsworth and his brothers, for instance, is a little masterpiece of biography as explained in terms of environment. Harmsworth had been educated at a school where Wells later became science master; and it was thus that Wells met the great publisher of penny-dreadfuls when the latter had only just begun his career, and the former was still a teacher. Another of these brief biographical essays, which, by the by, are units in themselves and do not follow the chronology of Wells's own story, concerns Frank Harris. It seems to me at least as good as anything I have ever read about this puzzling figure. Perhaps the most touching of the sketches deals with George Gissing, a man somewhat out of Wells's line, one would think, but a man for whom Wells seems to have had genuine affection. The account of the gradual disintegration of Gissing, although it takes up only a few paragraphs, cannot fail to move any reader.

Then there is that part of *Experiment in Autobiography* which deals with the author's own external life. It is well told, although the reader will have to do a good deal of digging if this is the part of the book which principally interests him. For it is interlarded with long sections devoted to the development of Wells's mind and ideas, which will certainly prove somewhat hard going for the general reader. This external life is in itself sufficiently commonplace and typical to contain a great deal that is revealing of the ways of thought of Cockney Englishmen at the turn of the century. Its origins and early years are particularly enlightening.

Herbert George Wells was born (1866) in a "needy, shabby home" in a little town called Bromley which has since become a suburb of London. His mother came of a family of small inn-keepers, but had herself been in service as a lady's maid. His father came of a family of gardeners on English country estates, and had himself been an under-gardener. Not long after the parents were married, the father bought a small crockery business in Bromley, which never went very well, and which had to be eked out with the sale of cricketing apparatus and occasional jobs as a professional cricketer. Finally Mrs. Wells went back into service as a housekeeper, and came to be the principal source of support for her husband and children, until Herbert was making enough at writing and teaching to take care of her and his father. Here was a most ordinary — in fact almost a typical — Cockney family, constantly harried by economic worry, constantly struggling to get enough to eat and to wear. As Wells several times points out, it was only an accident — in fact a series of accidents — which prevented him from becoming merely another draper's assistant.

These accidents began with a broken leg at the age of seven or eight, which turned him to reading; continued when the father broke *his* leg in 1877, which necessitated the mother's return to service and the break-up of the Bromley household. Little Bert was put out to serve his time as a draper's apprentice. Fortunately his bookish habits and lack of taste for the work brought this apprenticeship to a rapid conclusion. It was followed by a term as pupil-teacher in a country school, which ended after two or three months when Wells's "Uncle Williams" lost his position as headmaster. There followed in rapid succession an interlude spent in the house where the mother was in service (a house which possessed a reasonably good library), a month's unsuccessful apprenticeship to a pharmaceutical chemist, two months at a small grammar school at Midhurst. The headmaster of this school, a certain Horace Byatt, M.A., was a reasonably good teacher of elementary science, and it was from him that young Wells seems to have got his first taste of scientific training.

The next step was another apprenticeship to a draper, ending in open revolt and a position as Student Assistant to Byatt. Here Wells was in a position to earn substantial fees for his headmaster by boning up a miscellaneous variety of sciences and passing examinations in them set by the Education Department. He was so successful in this line of endeavour that at the end of his first year at Midhurst he was offered a free studentship at the Normal School of Science, South Kensington. There followed a rapturous year in Biology under Professor Huxley; a less interesting year in physics; and a very dismal year indeed in geology, ending in complete failure. But science teachers were hard to get in those days, and Wells was able to secure a position, in spite of his record, at a school in Wales. Here fate intervened once more with another accident. A crushed kidney followed by a mysterious weakness in one lung required a long period of convalescence which ended with a Rousseau-like conversion amidst a "great outbreak of wild hyacinths" in Staffordshire. Wells decided that writing must be his salvation, and that until he could get his living out of it, he must teach.

So teach he did, first at Henley House in a London suburb, then at what we should call a cramming school — the "University Correspondence College". Meanwhile Wells was learning to write by contributing to a number of scientific and academic journals. His income became sufficient to enable him to think of marriage; and in 1891 he and his wife, Isabel Wells, a first cousin, took up housekeeping in East Putney. In 1893 another attack of lung trouble made teaching impossible as a means of livelihood, but an accident once more saved the day. Up to this time Wells had written a good deal for publication, but at very little pay; he had not discovered the knack of earning a living at free-lance journalism. During his convalescence from the very attack which made further teaching out of the question, he chanced to discover in a book by J. M. Barrie the hint he needed for successful writing; it showed Wells the trick of "getting a story" out of the commonplace happenings of life. From that day on he was never again to find himself really pinched, financially.

The first marriage, however, was not working out well. At last, in January 1894, Wells left his cousin and took up residence in London with a former pupil, Miss Amy Catherine Robbins, who later — as soon as a divorce could be arranged — became his wife and continued so until her death in 1927. From 1894 to the present day the external part of Mr. Wells's life must be relatively well known from his books, for their writing has constituted the better part of it; no man could have produced so great a volume of work and at the same time have gone in for a particularly startling or adventurous external existence.

The subtitle to *Experiment in Autobiography* is "Discoveries and Conclusions of a Very Ordinary Brain". This is, in a sense, the key to the intention of the book, although the portions of it devoted to the matter so far discussed in this review will almost certainly be the more interesting to most readers. It may seem paradoxical to say that the formation of Mr. Wells's mind — a mind in itself most interesting, however little one may sympathize with its temper — should prove a rather tedious subject, at least to me. Mr. Wells carefully warns us that he is writing this book for himself, that he may not even publish it. He tells us: "If you do not want to explore an egoism you should not read autobiography." He is at great pains to make clear that his sole motive in writing is to clarify his own mind, "to reassure myself during a phase of fatigue, restlessness, and vexation". Toward the middle of his volume he has a paragraph which is perhaps worth quoting in full:

> I will confess that I find life too short for many things I would like to do. I do not think I am afraid of death but I wish it had not to come so soon. In the natural course of things I shall be lucky, I suppose, if I live a dozen years more, and beyond measure fortunate if I last as a fully living brain for another twenty years. This is barely time to turn round in. Good biography requires more time than that—let alone that I have other things to do. Yet I have known some intensely interesting people whom it would be delightful and rewarding to treat! It is a pity. If I could have forty good years or so more of good vigour, I could find a use for every day of it, and then I would write those copious intimate character studies, character in relation to changing values and conditions, that I now fear I shall never be able to do. They would have to be copious. Impermanent realities are not to be rendered without an abundance of matter. In a changing world there cannot be portraits without backgrounds and the source of the shifting reflected light upon the face has to be shown. Here at page 424 of this experiment in autobiography I have to assure the possibly incredulous reader that my attempt to compress it and reduce it to a quintessence has been strenuous and continual.

It is therefore altogether ungracious to take exception to this, the main substance of *Experiment in Autobiography*. There are a few brief passages of intellectual analysis — especially one remembers the criticism of nineteenth- and twentieth-century socialism — which stand out and are memorable. The rest seems foggy, often deliberately irreverent, often intolerably egotistical. The ideas at which Wells arrived — the colour of his mind and his influence — are too well known to need recapitulation; they certainly cannot be discussed in a brief review. An analysis from a sociological point of view of how such ideas came into being would be most interesting and valuable. There is some doubt as to whether Mr. Wells has achieved it, or, indeed, whether it could be achieved by anyone who had, in himself, constituted so large a part of the intellectual atmosphere of his day.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE

The Age of Innocence*

DR. CANBY'S book has already been so prominently reviewed in the daily and weekly papers, and so lavishly summarized, that a monthly magazine must necessarily assume that the book has found its hot-off-the-press readers, an assumption which relieves the reviewer of raising his voice. But even so I urge everyone over the age of thirty who enjoys reading–and every one over and under who is interested in the problems of our day – to buy or borrow *The Age of Confidence* and put it within easy reach of his most comfortable chair; because whatever value the book may have as an interpretation, it is one of those rare can't-put-it-down books, and is further distinguished by virtue of the residue it leaves in the mind, bitter and sweet and lingering. It raises questions one wants to answer, or see answered, at once; it defines problems; it startles memories of such sharp immediacy that the reader's own childhood memories accompany the author's like music playing softly under a voice.

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* THE AGE OF CONFIDENCE: Life in the Nineties *by Henry Seidel Canby* (FARRAR & RINEHART. 280 pp. $2.50.)

Dr. Canby has disarmed the analytical critic completely, by claiming that his discussion of life in a small town during the nineties (and the eighties and early nineteen-hundreds), is "a study in memory". Memoirs, he says, are a record of what was important at the time; history a record of what became important for the future. *The Age of Confidence*, avowedly not history, is therefore vulnerable only as to the conviction it carries and the pleasure it gives, and in these respects is beyond criticism. Any after-thoughts one may have of dissatisfaction – of questions unanswered, or analysis of values skimped – are not dissatisfaction with Dr. Canby, but with the urgent problems raised by reading his book and remaining discouragingly unsolved.

Any reader born before 1910 will know before he starts reading the book, simply by looking at a few of the charming illustrations, what kind of confidence Dr. Canby is going to remind him of. The quiet streets, the trees, the dignified houses, all these have a counterpart in most of our early memories, and with them the moral and spiritual tone for which they were the setting. Society in those days – meaning all groups of people who had the leisure and means to share backgrounds and amenities – society had a moral code which only the very strong were likely to infringe and only the very weak likely to find too exigent.

Education was a discipline, not a debatable form of self-expression. Homes were designed for permanence, and, budgetted for on such a scale, were really lived in by families. ("I shall not be surprised", Dr. Canby writes, "if the psychologists of 1950 discover that the growing intolerance of the nineteen-thirties was due to an abbreviated experience of family life, since the family is a microcosm of a world where different faiths have to try to live together.") Parents took for granted the now almost incomprehensible idea that having children meant for themselves the duty of maturity and stability, and they strove to attain these qualities with a self-sacrificial disinterestedness which earned them the respect and deference – if not the admiration and love – of their children. The sexual code was simple and stringent, the aesthetics of living largely material, and character (a lost concept in our world where individual happiness is the mainspring of conduct) was more respected than personality. Religion as an institution was an embalmed corpse, to which everyone paid respectful tribute, and the real faith of society was entrenched in Business, with worldly success and Progress the real objectives in life.

Most readers will remember this world, and have seen it break to pieces under the stress of its irreconcilable elements. Few want to fit the pieces together again (although every one wants to preserve at least some of the pieces), because that world – seemingly secure and in many ways preferable to the contemporary – drew its strength from the memory of institutions already doomed, its real energy bent on undermining itself.

> Our confidence [Dr. Canby writes] was illusion, but like most illusions it had many of the benefits of a fact. . . . Because of our confidence there were values in living in the nineties which are simply unpurchasable now. They are, in a true sense of the word, historical, and I have tried to describe them here because soon they will be discoverable only by research and then without the emotional margin which gave proportion and emphasis to the text. As experience, they are, I am sure, irrevocable, or at least not likely to occur again in our cycle; and the youth of our day, whatever else it may enjoy and profit by, will not have them, and will live differently because of the loss.

Comparing the Age of Confidence with our age of warring loyalties, it is difficult to escape the judgement that the virtue our society lacks today is not primarily an ethic, or a system, but that strength the memory of which sustained our parents, the reality of which was engulfed for them by the seductive profits of Industrialism – the strength of religious conviction. One tries to escape this inference, because it is impractical as a basis for action. There is no use in saying to the world: "Be religious and your problems will once again be soluble." The individual by thousands may reason himself back to first principles, but society as a whole cannot. On the other hand, it is inescapably true that our American tradition stems from English Protestantism, and "the Protestant gospel of work", as Dr. Canby calls it, carried within itself (not by definition, but as a matter of historical fact), the seeds of its own dissolution. It divorced conduct from authority, leaving it to the prejudice of small groups. It gave tacit approval to individual enterprise and hence to a world in which there was no inner check on greed. And greed is only to a limited extent subject to outer checks, except under some form of slavery or terrorization.

ELEANOR CARROLL CHILTON

The Biography of Newton*

ALTHOUGH two centuries have come and gone since the death of Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) we have been to this date without any adequate and trustworthy biography of the great scientist. The one presumably authoritative study, Sir David Brewster's *Memoirs*, published eighty years ago, is lamentably deficient in any effort to present Newton as a being of flesh and blood, to offer a critical appraisal of his personal character, or to make a due evaluation of his political and religious activities.

To fill that lacuna in our biographical literature Dr. More, who is Professor of Physics in the University of Cincinnati, offers this new life of Newton. The book, the result of seven years' work, is a veritable triumph of research. The chief source of material for the study of Newton's personal life and character is the famous Portsmouth Collection of Newtoniana. Dr. More has read all these documents, besides covering other unpublished Newtonian documents in various libraries. His familiarity with mathematics, physics, and chemistry equip him to understand the subject-matter of Newton's experiments, writings, and controversies. His further qualifications for the rôle of Newton's biographer include the gift of clear exposition and the mastery of a delightfully fluent style. This makes his lengthy and detailed study a pleasant book to read.

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* ISAAC NEWTON *by Louis Trenchard More* (SCRIBNER'S. 675 pp. $4.50.)

Newton, as Dr. More sees him, was an aloof and sensitive being, a man full of human contradictions. While he was habitually patient, gentle, and kindly, he was cursed with a suspicious and jealous temperament which marred his whole life. Resenting even the mildest criticism, he was involved in constant quarrels and altercations. His pupil Montague, afterwards Lord Halifax, seems to have been the only person who ever crossed the frontiers of his reserve. With this one possible exception the great Newton "had no intimate and personal friends who penetrated the ivory tower in which he jealously guarded his inner life". He lived in a world destitute of women and but rarely populated with men.

When he was fifty years of age and at the height of his powers, his creative work in the scientific field came to an abrupt end. With more than thirty years of his life still to run, he obtained, after a series of humiliating supplications, the great public post of Warden of the Mint. In discussing the resultant biographical problem, as in the case of many others also, Dr. More makes short work of the Brewster hypothesis. His own conjecture is that Newton had never been deeply interested in science for itself and that he wished to have the opportunity to follow his stronger inclination towards theology and history. He reminds us that this great mathematical genius considered mathematics a dry and barren subject and that even in the earlier part of his life he found a scientific career so litigious that he threatened to give up all research.

It goes without saying that the chapters on Newton's scientific achievements are handled in masterly fashion. With equal skill Dr. More moves through the maze of controversy that formed the background of Newton's later life. As to the biographical evaluation of the man's character, Dr. More approaches his task with such honesty of purpose and carries it through with such rigid objectivity that his portrait of this strange genius is to be greeted only by words of congratulation for a task well conceived and faithfully done.

But when Dr. More leaves the field of biography and enters the region devoted to the critical exposition of the history of ideas, his work is not so satisfactory. Here is a provocative sentence that occurs on the second page of the preface:

> In this day of the utilitarian omnipotence of science, it is extraordinarily difficult for a biographer to sympathize with, or even to appreciate, the conviction of Newton and his contemporaries that their purpose in the cultivation of science was to demonstrate the action of the divine will in the natural world, and not to contribute to our comfort, safety, and power.

Passing over the infelicitous phrase about the utilitarian omnipotence of science (pure science being at least as much pursued today as it ever was), we may point to the confusion of thought in the use of the word *purpose*. That Newton may have felt that his scientific work had its chief value in its support of revealed religion is one thing. That an apologetic ideal determined his scientific activities is quite another matter. The truth is to be found in the third chapter of the book where Dr. More expressly tells us what view Newton took of his scientific rôle:

> At the very beginning of his career he had grasped the idea that the true function of science is to observe and classify a set of selected phenomena and from them to formulate laws which will predict, as accurately as possible, future events. To go further than this, *to imagine the mechanism which operates to produce the phenomenon*, is to pass from the field of physics into metaphysics. [The italics are mine.]

In other words, Newton's purpose in the cultivation of science was simply to observe and classify phenomena and to formulate appropriate physical laws.

Another provocative passage is his exposition of the famous Newtonian phrase *hypotheses non fingo*. It is not easy at this date to know precisely what Newton may have meant by the expression, which certainly was not a principle in accord with his own scientific practice. Dr. More tells us that the great scientist "discarded hypothesis from science altogether" and that "an hypothesis was merely a speculation as to the cause or the method of phenomena". Now, of course, an hypothesis in scientific work is more than a speculation. It is a working theory which seeks not merely to connect or to collate two or more separate facts but to do this in the light of certain fundamental principles. Hypotheses are necessary in all scientific inquiry, for the experimentalist must have some sort of picture of what he is trying to do. Does not Dr. More himself give to one interesting chapter of his book the name "The Mechanistic Hypothesis from Democritus to Newton"?

In this chapter on the mechanistic hypothesis Dr. More makes a very confusing survey of the mediaeval scene. With a mass of historical evidence against him he tells us that the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were marked by a hostility to the spread of natural philosophy. He speaks of the two great scholastics, Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas, as "the authors of the orthodox Catholic faith"! He sees the fall of Constantinople in 1204 as the signal for a revival of Platonism, which brought about "a renewed interest in mathematics and mechanics", failing to see that it more brilliantly signalized Aristotle's entrance into the commonwealth of Western thought. He claims that, just as the renaissance of literature and art was heralded by a revival of Platonism, so also the later renaissance of science was a determined and bitter revolt against Aristotelianism. He seems quite blind to the fact that the scholastic reverence for reason, as illustrated in the teachings of Aquinas, has had a great deal to do with the genesis of modern scientific work.

In his chapter on the *Principia*, speaking of Newton's identification of an infinite medium, or space, with the active cause of universal force, our author recognizes the influence of the English Platonist, Henry More. It is not without interest to note here that Henry More's notion of space, which appears under the title of "absolute" space as one of the fundamental principles of Newton's *Principia*, was held eleven centuries earlier by the celebrated John Philopon, an Alexandrian philosopher who subjected some of Aristotle's conclusions to a wholesome criticism. So Newton's debt in this matter goes much farther back than our author assumes. It goes beyond the "sterile and barren field" of the Middle Ages to the benighted regions of the Dark Ages.

Without examining further Dr. More's treatment of the Middle Ages, it is sufficient to say that, in following the fashion of looking back at the mediaeval scene rather than in looking forward from it, he puts himself in a position whence he cannot see just where Newton stands in the history of ideas. This criticism, however, detracts but little from his great work as Newton's biographer. Dr. More's devotion to his chosen task over so long a period of arduous research, his skill in assembling and arranging his material, his objective manner of telling the story of Newton's life, all this leaves us in his debt. He has written a work that will stand forth for many years as a brilliant example of American scholarship.

CHAS. F. RONAYNE

The Legendary Crockett*

IN a biography of David Crockett written primarily for young people, Constance Rourke has incorporated a body of new material which makes the book interesting to adults, and valuable to students of American folklore. The Crockett she portrays is an epic hero, a real person who has somehow joined Paul Bunyan, Mike Fink, John Henry, and other legendary characters in an American Valhalla of folk mythology.

Crockett the man is somewhat obscured; Crockett the great hunter, the teller of tall tales, above all, Crockett the mythical hero of the frontier, appears in all the glory of folklore. Miss Rourke interweaves these tales gracefully and ingeniously into the narrative by putting them into the mouths of characters. Through hearsay, Crockett appears as cradled in a snapping turtle's shell, as becoming the great bear-hunter of the western country, as master of a wondrous tame bear named Death Hug, and, indeed, as hero of various supernatural exploits such as greasing lightning. All of these fabulous stories have reality, in the same sense that Beowulf and Paul Bunyan have reality, but they have additional importance in that, for once, they are centered around a definite historical character whose factual biography is fairly definitely known to us.

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* DAVY CROCKETT *by Constance Rourke* (HARCOURT BRACE. 286 pp. $2.50.)

In one respect, this emphasis on the legendary phases of Crockett's character is unfortunate. Miss Rourke has not attempted to separate the myth from the man; as straight biography, *Davy Crockett* lacks sufficient body and historical detail to represent a complete answer to the accusations that Crockett was a tool in the hands of Whig politicians. She defends Crockett generally without making the necessary distinctions between his first two terms in Congress, when he truly voiced the ideas of the frontier on the public-lands question, and his final term when, embittered by a previous defeat at the hands of Jackson's adherents, he was in fact a tool. Also, there are slight errors which betray unfamiliarity with Tennessee history. For example: "The battle of King's Mountain was fought, and before the Revolution was ended a few settlers had come over the Blue Ridge from the Carolinas and Virginia to build cabins." But King's Mountain was largely fought and won by frontiersmen who had already settled in Tennessee and Kentucky.

Miss Rourke succeeds far better with her examination of the authorship of the Crockett books. Here she inclines a little too heavily in Crockett's favour, and discounts the undoubted assistance which he received as largely unimportant, but she makes plain a fact too often overlooked: that three different men helped Crockett with the three books which are beyond question by him (internal examination of the books has pointed unmistakably to this). As the Crockett letters reveal, the *Narrative* was in the handwriting of Thomas Chilton of Kentucky, who received one-half the royalties on the book; the *Tour* was written with the help of Matthew St. Clair Clarke, and the *Van Buren* with the aid of Augustine Clayton of Georgia. She is also inclined, in spite of considerable evidence to the contrary, to give Crockett a considerable hand in the other books attributed to him.

Although the scholarly discussion of sources and of disputed points in Crockett's career, embodied in a long and mature critical essay at the end of the book, is the most valuable part for the scholar, it is incidental to the main narrative. The body of the book contains a simple account of Crockett's life and it contains in addition the best and most extensive single account of the folklore which has made him of legendary as well as of historical interest.

EDD WINFIELD PARKS